Mike Arroyo on PCSO funds: An invention

STORY ON PAGE A2

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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'Narcopolitics' scandals clouding PMA's name

BY VINCENT CABREZA
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau
AND ARMAND NOCUM

STUNG by a senator's observation that the Philippine Military Academy had "produced" police officials accused of drug trafficking, the academy yesterday said it was instituting reforms to avoid turning out "garbage" among its graduates.

'NARCOPOLITICS'/ A17

Text joke gets Pinoy in trouble

BY DONA PAZZIBUGAN
AND GERALD LACUARTA

"I WAS wondering if I can stay with you for a couple of days. Everybody's so angry

TEXT/ A17

NAYKOOO! MAY TEXT VOKE NA NAMAN!!!

It's not bioterrorism

Simple flu outbreak in Catholic schools triggers panic in the city

BY AGNES DONATO,
ROCKY NAZARENO,
MARTIN P. MARFIL
AND CYNTHIA D. BALANA

THERE was chaos in several private schools in Pasig, Mandaluyong and San Juan. Mothers were pulling their children out of schools. The text messages got wilder. At no time were there so many students—more than 500 in one school alone—suddenly downed by "flu-like" symptoms all at the same time.

Had terrorists unleashed lethal viruses? Had a biological attack started?

The bioterrorism scare started yesterday with a "crawler" on ABS-CBN News Channel (ANC) at about 10:30 a.m. that hundreds of students at a Catholic girl's school in Pasig City were downed by an unknown airborne virus.

The cable news channel followed it up with reports that more children at other exclusive schools near St. Paul College were suffering from flu-like symptoms.

The news triggered a flurry of text messages and sent parents scurrying to fetch their children at St. Paul College, Poveda Learning School in Mandaluyong City and La Salle Greenhills, Xavier School and Immaculate Concepcion Academy in San Juan.

Officials were not quick enough to douse the city's worst fears. And when they did, they were hardly informative about what was really going on.

"It's just hysteria because of reports in media about chemical warfare," presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said.

He said the hysteria was also caused by what he called "text attacks."

Tiglao said he received several text messages, which first stated that 30 had fallen ill. The messages, he

IT'S/ A18

AN EPIDEMIC of fear sweeps La Salle Greenhills in San Juan as mothers pulled out their children from school where 277 students were downed all at the same time allegedly by an "airborne virus."

VALHANDUMON/AP

Just a mild strain of flu, says DOH

BY NORMAN BORDADORA

A MILD strain of influenza—something that would go away after just two days of bed rest and drinking enough water—was what sent Metro Manila into a mild hysteria amid rumors of a biological terrorist attack on children studying at Catholic schools.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit identified the virus as the H1N1 strain, which he said was a five on a scale of one to 10.

"(The supposed viral disease outbreak in these private schools) is just a reporting artifact," Dayrit said at a press conference at the Department of Health (DOH) headquarters in Manila.

JUST/ A18

Spotting flu's signs, symptoms

BY DR. JOSE PUJALTE JR.

SO, what is the flu?

Flu is a viral infection that affects the respiratory system—your nose, throat, windpipe, bronchial tubes and lungs.

It is not intestinal "flu" which is really gastroenteritis (diarrhea, nausea and vomiting). It is not just a bad case of the common cold. However, just like the cold, the flu may also present with sneezing, a runny nose and a sore throat. However, with the flu you would also get high fever.

Signs and symptoms

Here's why getting the flu feels like a knockout punch. You get:

- Muscle aches and pains particularly in the arms, legs and back.
- Nasal congestion.
- High fever (one-day to one-week long).
- Fatigue.
- Dry cough.
- Chills and sweats.

SPOTTING/ A11

Flu downs hundreds of students

BY AGNES DONATO,
BLANCHE RIVERA
AND PHILIP C. TUBEZA

HUNDREDS of students in several Catholic schools in Metro Manila were downed by a virus, forcing the most badly hit school to suspend classes for a week.

On Monday alone, more than 500 students of St. Paul College were treated for flu-like symptoms.

"It is alarming to note that for the first time in the history of St. Paul Pasig, more than 500 students in the grade school and high school were brought to the clinic . . . for the same symptoms of fever, cough and colds," the school said in a statement.

FLU/ A18

Blair: Time running out on Taliban

LONDON—British Prime Minister Tony Blair has a message for Afghanistan's Taliban rulers: Time has run out for handing over Osama bin Laden.

In another sign that US-led military strikes are inevitable, Pakistani President Gen. Pervez Musharaff said he had all but given up on efforts to mediate the standoff between the Taliban and Washington over Bin Laden.

In Kabul, Taliban fighters stepped up their preparations for war by bolstering their garrison in the Afghan capital.

For its part, the United States continued its military buildup as US President George W. Bush reported progress on several fronts to track down Bin Laden, chief suspect in the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

In a speech at a Labor Party conference later Tuesday, Blair was set to announce that the Taliban had been given the chance to turn over Bin Laden.

In an advance briefing, Labor Party aides said Blair was also expected to announce that the US-led strikes would be directed at Bin Laden's training camps and the Taliban's military hardware, supplies and finances.

"We were interacting with them (the Taliban) so that moderation could take place and maybe this kind of action is averted," Musharaff told the British Broadcasting Corp. on Monday.

"But it appears because of the stand that the Taliban have taken, that confrontation will take place."

Musharaff said it now appeared that the United States would take action in Afghanistan. "We have conveyed this to the Taliban," he said.

Asked if the Taliban's days were

BLAIR/ A7

Germ warfare: What the real thing is like

BY DR. RAFAEL R. CASTILLO

IMAGINE yourself waking up one day with high-grade fever, aches and pains, with swollen glands all over.

You take your antipyretics, but the fever just won't go down. Soon you note vesicles and other types of skin eruptions, and your gums bleed profusely when you brush your teeth. More bleeding comes from the nose and anus.

Your wife and children start to show the same symptoms, so do several members of the household and many people in the neighborhood.

When you call up your family physician, you are told that he was just rushed to the hospital for the same problem.

With your last ounce of strength, you drive yourself and your family to the nearest hospital only to find that the whole emergency room is

GERM/ A18

Erap asks court to 'nullify' Monday hearing

BY DONNA S. CUETO
AND MICHAEL LIM UBAC

OUSTED President Joseph Estrada yesterday asked the Sandiganbayan to "nullify" Monday's hearing in his plunder trial on the grounds that he was "denied the right to counsel," as his nine lawyers found themselves in hot water for skipping the trial's first day.

The Ombudsman said his office had filed a motion to cite the defense lawyers for contempt.

But Estrada lawyer Rene Saguisag denied the defense was engaged in delaying tactics and said he was absent because his wife had a medical emergency and because of another case involving "certain swarthy Middle Eastern clients."

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, however, said the failure of any of Estrada's lawyers to show up Monday was an intentional boycott of the hearing to force the court to delay the trial.

"It is a tactical strategy which I think did not work out. They should not make a mockery of the proceedings of the court," Perez said.

Ombudsman Aniano Desierto said "we filed a motion to cite them for contempt because it was simultaneous. Nine lawyers of ex-President Estrada were not with him."

He added: "It is impossible that all of them would have commitments more important than their commitment to defend him in this court."

Estrada, on the other hand, gave the green light to his counsel to file administrative charges against the three justices of the Sandiganbayan's third division for engaging in "grave oppression" by forcing him to attend the hearing.

Just the same, Estrada will be forced to appear in court today at 1 p.m.—this time with some of his lawyers present—to be arraigned on the separate charge of using an illegal alias.

In courtroom scenes verging on comedy, the former President showed up at his Monday trial wearing slippers after police escorted him to the Sandiganbayan.

ERAP/ A18

Second FRONT PAGE

SIYA NA NAMAN ?!@#!

Plan to modernize, Comelec told

By Christine Avendaño

THE SENATE yesterday gave the Commission on Elections until December to come up with its modernization plan in a bid to ensure that the next major elections in 2004 would be clean and fair.

Sen. Edgardo Angara, chair of the Senate committee on electoral reforms, told Comelec officials to form a nine-man committee that would study how to go about modernizing the Comelec, particularly in setting up the system to register and identify voters.

The nine-man technical committee would be made up of three technical representatives from the offices of Senators Ramon Magsaysay Jr., Juan Flavier and Franklin Drilon, who are proponents of the Senate measures on Comelec's modernization; three from Comelec; a representative designated by Angara; and two representatives from the private sector.

Angara told Comelec officials that the December deadline would give authorities two years to implement the modernization plan and have it pre-tested.

Angara told reporters his committee was leaving it up to the Comelec to decide what recommendations it will adopt in its modernization program, whether that be of Photokina Marketing Corp., the winning bidder of the Voters Registration and Identification System project, or the "alternative" modernization program of the Comelec.

Comelec chair Alfredo Benipayo presented for the first time the "alternative" modernization program in yesterday's resumption of the Senate hearing on the status of the Comelec's modernization program.

In yesterday's hearing, Benipayo said that the alternative plan or the National Computerized Voters List (NCVL) would cost only P2.9 billion as compared to the P6.9 billion of the five-year VRIS project proposal of Photokina.

He told the Senate hearing that the NCVL would enable authorities to "trace anyone, detect double or multiple registrants."

This plan would entail the purchase of computers and to come up with a server capable of consolidating data of a maximum of 100 million voters, the Comelec chief.

PCSO FUNDS MISUSE

Mike: They invented that

By Martin P. Marfil
and Christine Avendaño

FIRST Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo yesterday said he was "shocked" at the reports linking him to the reported misuse of P250 million of Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office funds.

"That's shocking. I'm surprised. They invented that. I don't interfere in PCSO affairs, they have their own officers, they have a board of directors. I don't control that," Arroyo said in Filipino in an interview with Radio Mindanao Network.

The Senate is to start an investigation next week into allegations that the P250 million from the PCSO had been used to finance the publicity requirements of several administration senatorial candidates in the May elections.

Sen. John Osmeña, chair of the committee on finance, said he would ask the PCSO to open its books and provide his committee with copies of its annual reports from 1986 onwards, so the investigation would cover all administrations from President Corazon Aquino to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"The PCSO and the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. have been kitties of all the Presidents, from President Corazon Aquino (to the present)," he said.

Draft speech

The whole issue arose from a draft of a privileged speech that was circulated at the Senate media office the other day with the understanding that Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. was to deliver it soon.

The INQUIRER had checked with Pimentel who denied he ever wrote it or intended to deliver it on the Senate floor.

But other newspapers went ahead with the story.

Yesterday, Pimentel took the floor to disown the speech.

"I have nothing to do with that so-called draft and as a matter of fact I am not delivering a privilege speech," he said.

The Senate was prompted to look into the allegations after administration Sen. Joker Arroyo and Sen. Edgardo Angara figured in a heated exchange over the matter yesterday.

ARROYO

Joker Arroyo, who was named as one of the four senatorial bets who benefited from the misappropriated funds, took the floor in yesterday's session to deny any knowledge of it.

Joker Arroyo said that he and Sen. Juan Flavier, another alleged beneficiary, were grateful if they did get funding from the government agency.

Joker's mum

Angara then took the floor to question Joker Arroyo but the latter declined to make any response insisting that he and Flavier knew nothing about it.

Angara then told Joker Arroyo that the allegations were "very serious," prompting the latter to quip: "We're not accountable, answerable, we don't owe anyone an explanation."

Joker Arroyo then told Angara that if he wanted to attack him and Flavier, then he should make a privilege speech.

Angara replied that if he were the chair of the blue ribbon committee, he would have called for an investigation, "because it involved me and the integrity of some colleagues."

Joker Arroyo, who chairs the blue ribbon committee, curtly answered that he did not dictate to a senator what he should do to his committee so he did not expect to be dictated to with regard to his committee.

The session was suspended for a few minutes as Angara approached Joker Arroyo to talk to him.

Pimentel told reporters they should interview Robert Rivero, a former PCSO media consultant, who was quoted in the draft speech as the source of the allegations on the alleged misuse of the PCSO funds.

Rivero resigned in August as PCSO consultant after he was accused of trying to obtain kickbacks from radio stations running PCSO advertisements.

'Media blitz'

Pimentel said Rivero had approached him this month with his expose against Mike Arroyo.

According to the draft speech, Mike Arroyo reportedly had control over PCSO funds and that he had designated Rivero to take charge of a "media blitz" for four senatorial bets of the administration's People Power Coalition.

The draft speech did not identify the four senatorial bets but a newspaper named Joker Arroyo, Flavier, Ernesto Herrera and Roberto Pagdanganan.

The PCSO was said to have prepared a budget to fund the media campaign of the four PPC bets, including bribe money for broadcast journalists.

In the same radio interview, Mike Arroyo said the newspapers which run the story should have checked first with the Commission on Audit auditors assigned to the PCSO.

Ask COA

"They should have asked the COA personnel there how the fund was spent and if I had a hand in the deals. It's so easy to ask. Why are they linking me to the deal?" he said.

Press Undersecretary Roberto Capco said he would resign if it could be proven through COA documents that the funds had been used for the electoral campaign of pro-administration candidates.

"Anyone can ask the COA to produce the audit report on the PCSO. If the COA report says we used it, we will be gone," Capco said.

Both Mike Arroyo and Capco said they both knew Rivero but Capco said that he was not sure if the accusations really came from Rivero whom he referred to as "his friend."

Also yesterday, a new spokesperson for Mike Arroyo surfaced in Malacañang.

His spokesperson, Patricia Bunye, said in a media briefing that the allegations were "unsubstantiated" and were the handiwork of groups out to discredit Mike Arroyo.

She did not identify the groups saying merely that they operate "in the shadows."

RP asked to ratify GMO pact

By C.D. Balana

THE PRO-ENVIRONMENT Greenpeace International yesterday urged the government to ratify the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in order to regulate the movement of genetically modified organisms (GMO) in food into the country.

It also asked government authorities to prevent the contamination of the nation's food supply with genetically altered ingredients.

In a letter to the Department of Foreign Affairs last week, the Greenpeace said the government must take immediate steps to ratify the protocol in the face of the continuing cases of genetic pollution within and outside the country.

It said recent tests commissioned by the group on common food items sold in the market revealed the widespread presence and massive use of GMOs in these products.

"The confirmed presence of GMOs in our food supply, without the public's knowledge and consent, should be basis enough to jolt our government authorities into action," the Greenpeace said.

"We need mandatory labeling for products containing GMOs in order to safeguard the rights and welfare of Filipino consumers," it added.

It said ratifying the protocol is consistent with both consumer and biosafety protection.

Beau Baconguis, Greenpeace genetic engineering campaigner for Southeast Asia, said that governments are currently meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, to discuss the implementation of the protocol, to which the Philippines is a signatory.

The protocol was established to ensure that the development, handling, transport use, transfer and release of GMOs are undertaken in a manner that prevents or reduces the risks to biosafety diversity and human health.

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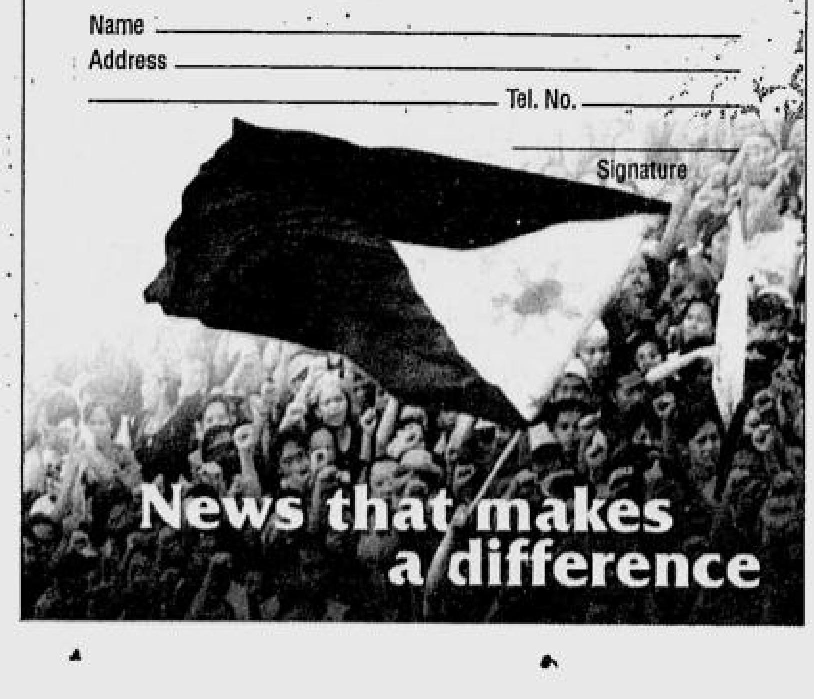
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Solons hit Lacson for attack on Perez

By Volt Contreras

CASTING aside inter-parliamentary courtesy, some 30 representatives led by Speaker Jose de Venecia yesterday issued a manifesto castigating opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson for his "irresponsible, scurrilous and unsubstantiated" accusations against Justice Secretary Hernando Perez whom Lacson alleged to have $20 million stashed in a Hong Kong bank account.

The legislators, most of whom belonged to De Venecia's "Sunshine Coalition," dismissed Lacson's allegations as a possible attempt to get the heat off the former national police chief whose alleged criminal activities are being investigated by the Senate.

The one-page manifesto, which was issued late yesterday afternoon, read in part:

"We adopt a cautious approach towards these character attacks (against Perez) on the ground that these might simply be motivated by a personal attempt to deflect attention from the ongoing congressional inquiry into the Senator's (Lacson) manifold accountabilities and responsibilities as chief of the PNP."

LACSON

The representatives expressed their "grave concern over the recent irresponsible, scurrilous and unsubstantiated remarks made by Sen. Lacson that intend to malign, degrade or impugn the credibility and integrity of Secretary Perez."

Perez is a ranking official of the Lakas-NUCD, De Venecia's party, which is allied with the Nationalist People's Coalition in the "Sunshine Coalition."

The signatories also included Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II, Representatives Juan Miguel Zubiri, Frank Perez, Krisel Lagman-Luistro, Del de Guzman, Amado Espino Jr., Oscar Rodriguez, Renato Unico—all Lakas members;

Representatives Teodoro Locsin Jr. of PDP-Laban; Benigno Aquino Jr., Eric Singson, Junie Cua, Alita Suarez, and Florencio Abad of the Liberal Party; Luis Bersamin of PDSP; Willie Villarama of Aksyon Demokratiko; Mark Cojuangco, Conrad Estrella III, Felix Fuentebella, Vida Espinosa, Faustino Dy, Zenaida Ducut, and Uliran Joaquin of NPC; and Arthur Celeste, an independent.

Nani: Not media-shy, just busy

By Cathy C. Yamsuan

BURDENED with work, not media-shy.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said it was the additional workload from Malacañang that was keeping him from facing reporters, and which necessitated his appointing Undersecretary Manuel A.J. Teehankee as his spokesperson.

Perez was dousing speculations that he wanted to evade media questions about allegations by Sen. Panfilo Lacson that he had accepted a $2-million bribe from an Argentine firm for approving a hydroelectric power plant rehabilitation contract.

He would not say, however, what was the nature of the extra work that President Macapagal-Arroyo has been giving him.

He said numerous invitations from various media forums were taking up much of his time.

"Every day of the week there is a media forum. If I attend all of them, I will never be able to work," Perez said.

Perez said Teehankee's appointment should not be misconstrued as an avoidance measure since he would still grant interviews to reporters.

He added that questions made to his mobile phone were "better" as he would be able to respond to them more quickly.

"You can call me from 7:30 a.m. onwards. I accept all calls in the morning except when I am rushing to the office and when rushing from one appointment to another," Perez said.

In an earlier interview with dzRH radio, Perez admitted to having some misgivings about allowing ambush interviews outside his office at the justice department, particularly by the staircase that faces its front door.

"I would prefer to hold regular briefings that are more formal. The (ambush) interviews are done in the corridor, near the stairs. The corridor is so narrow and it's so near the staircase, there might be an accident," he explained.

Perez also complained that ambush interviews have made him late for appointments.

"Sometimes, the reporters block my path to force me to answer questions. I come late to my other appointments. We should have a time and place for interviews. If I am not available, Undersecretary Teehankee will be there," he said.

Filipino student from Pakistan held at airport

A YOUNG Filipino student who flew in from Pakistan on Monday was held for questioning on suspicion that he is one of the 50 suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits who had reportedly trained with the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Hadsi Ahmad Masud, 22, however, denied this, claiming throughout his interrogation by immigration officers that he merely underwent training on Islamic ideologies in Pakistan in his two-year stay there.

He added that there were 30 other Filipinos who were undergoing training in the same institution, which he declined to identify, immigration officers said.

Masud, who arrived at 4 p.m. on Monday from Karachi, said he came home to avoid being caught in the war the US-led global coalition might wage against Pakistan's neighbor, Afghanistan, for harboring suspected terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden.

Immigration officers released him after an hour-long interrogation but alerted the intelligence community of his arrival.

Despite his denials, the officers, however, believed that Masud could be among the 50 suspected Abu Sayyaf members who had reportedly trained with the Taliban, the ruling militia in Afghanistan.

In a report to Commissioner Andrea Domingo, they pointed out that Masud knew two other Filipinos who arrived from Karachi on Sept. 23 and claimed they were his classmates.

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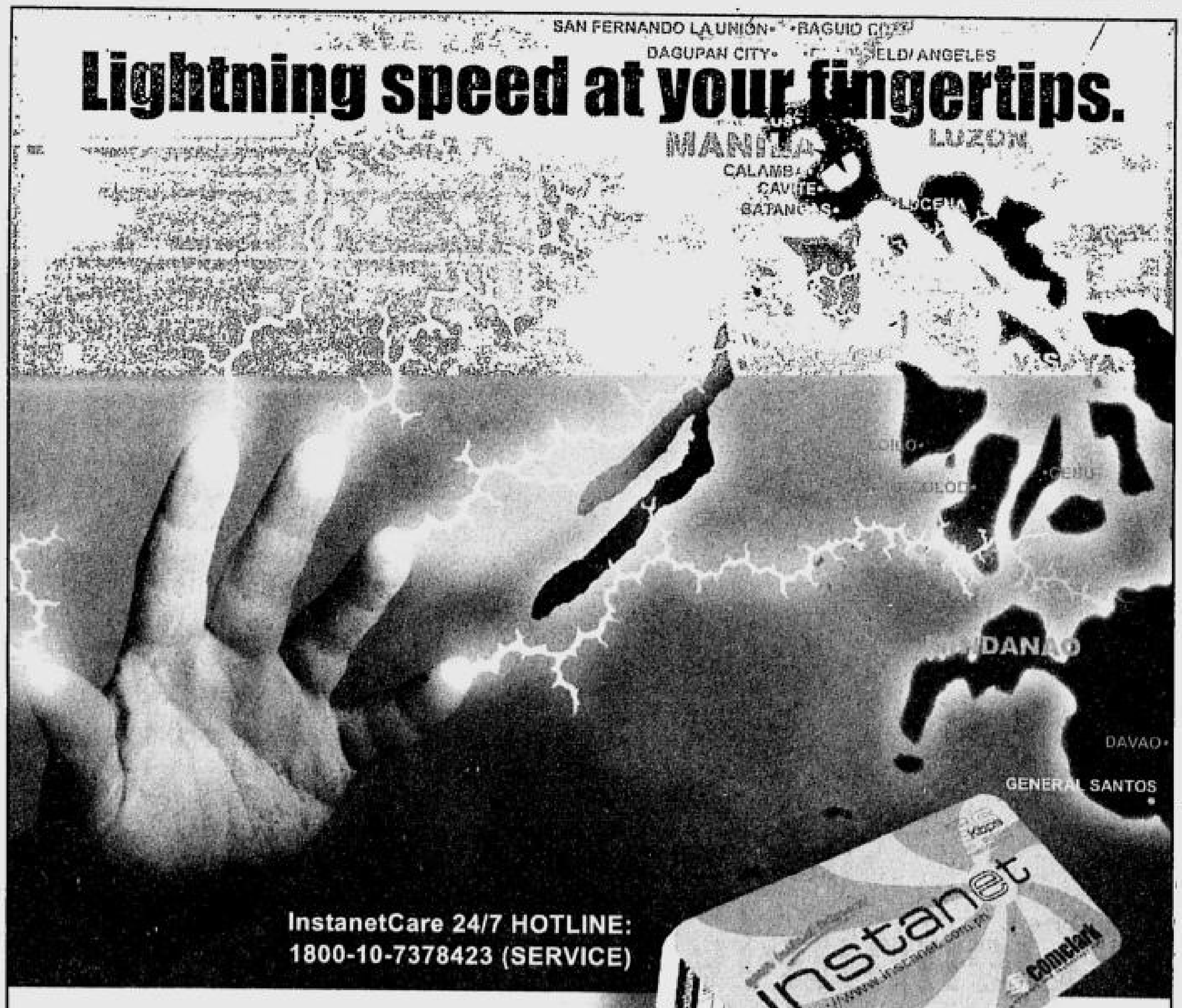

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Per DTI-NCR permit no. 3042, series of 2001

PUNZALAN SLAYS

NBI files murder raps vs solon's alleged killer

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation has filed murder charges in Tiaong, Quezon, against the alleged gunman in the killing of Quezon Rep. Marcial Punzalan and his cousin-bodyguard on May 12.

Charged with double murder was Andro Quitalig, alias Ramil, of Barangay Bucal in Sariaya, Quezon.

Several other John Does were included in the suit.

The NBI officer-in-charge, Lolito Utitco, however, did not indicate if Quitalig was a member of the New People's Army Melito Glor Command, which had claimed responsibility for the killing.

Utitco has ordered a massive manhunt for Quitalig and his unidentified cohorts after the Tiaong municipal trial court issued a warrant for their arrest.

Based on a report submitted to NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco, the NBI Lucena District Office (Lucdo) said Quitalig was positively identified by witnesses as the one who shot Punzalan during an election rally at the Marcial Punzalan Sr. Memorial Sports Complex.

The 56-year-old Punzalan died from three bullet wounds in the head. He was the 56th fatality in the run-up to the May 14 elections. His cousin, Conrado Soriano, 59, was also killed, while three others were wounded.

Quezon province court records showed that Quitalig has a pending case involving the killing of a member of the Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit, or Cafgu, in Sariaya.

"His whereabouts remain unknown although the NBI received and verified the information that he is hiding somewhere in Candelaria, Quezon," Cesar Ginga, the Lucdo officer-in-charge said.

NBI spokesperson Alexander Carbonel said a report from Ginga did not indicate whether Quitalig was a communist rebel.

The NPA Melito Glor Command had said that Punzalan was killed for "his long list of crimes against the people," including allegedly protecting drug lords in the province.

In a statement sent to the media, the rebel unit said "a special operations group punished Congressman Marcial Punzalan with death" after a "people's court" had tried him and found him guilty.

The NBI, however, is looking at another theory, involving the Escueta family, Punzalan's political rivals.

The Punzalan family has refused to believe that NPA rebels had carried out the killings on their own. They believe the killing was politically motivated.

The Melito Glor Command has also claimed responsibility for the killing on May 7 of the mayor of Tanauan town, Cesar Platon.

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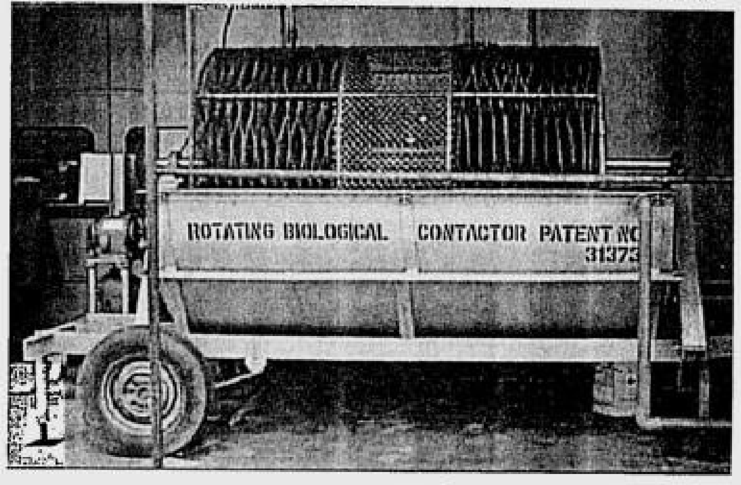

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2 Indons with fake visas held

IMMIGRATION agents have arrested two Indonesians who tried to enter the United States with visas using Manila as their transit point.

The two, identified as Mahmudin Mahfud and Mohamad Mahfud were arrested at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on Sunday moments after they arrived aboard a Philippine Airlines flight from Singapore.

Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo said the two were transit passengers and were about to board their connecting flight to San Francisco, California, when intercepted by members of the BI enforcement unit at the transit area of the Naia 2 Centennial Terminal.

Domingo said the two were barred from boarding their planes after immigration officers noted that the US visas pasted on their passports appeared to be tampered.

The anti-fraud unit of the US Embassy in Manila later confirmed that the visas were tampered and contained substituted pictures.

The Indonesians were immediately deported pending further investigation their possible links to a human smuggling syndicate.

The two had admitted paying $50 for the spurious visas. Investigation showed the Indonesians were holders of a seaman's book and their US visas were applied by the shipping agent Fred Olsen Black Watch based in Pasar Minggu, Jakarta.

Gerald G. Lacuarta

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DAY 2 (Oct. 5, 2001)

Session 4
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NPC kicks out N. Ecija solon

THE NATIONALIST People's Coalition has expelled Nueva Ecija Rep. Raul Villareal from its ranks.

In a letter to Villareal, NPC executive committee chair Gilberto Teodoro Jr. informed the Nueva Ecija solon that the party "has finally decided to withdraw your membership in the party."

While it was not mentioned in the letter, Teodoro said Villareal's expulsion was caused by his "behavior toward (NPC partymate) Pampanga Rep. Juan Pablo Bondoc."

"And this behavior he displayed toward Rimpy was seen by the entire House not only once but twice right on the session floor," Teodoro said.

The letter was sent to Villareal a day after the Nueva Ecija congressman threw a tantrum while the House was deliberating on the anti-money laundering bill last Wednesday.

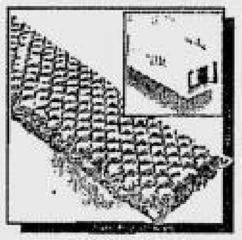
Apparently, Villareal was enraged that Bondoc was set to preside over as floor leader in the absence of House Majority Floor Leader Rep. Neptali Gonzales Jr. and his deputy Rep. Francis Joseph Escudero.

Villareal refused to be pacified and threatened to question the quorum, which could have derailed the proceedings.

It was only after Speaker Jose de Venecia stepped into the squabble that Villareal stopped, but not after Bondoc was unceremoniously asked to step out of the session hall.

It was the second time that Villareal showed his disdain for Bondoc on the session floor.

Sometime last July, Villareal challenged Bondoc to a fistfight right on the session floor after the younger solon thumbed down his request for vice chairmanship in major House committees.



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Time To Reflect

(Global Competitiveness Part IX)

The terror attacks on America have made us realize how vulnerable countries can be no matter how powerful they are, and how mortal we all are.

This tragedy gives us a chance to reflect on things and values that really count. Those that count are many. Like our moral values. Our spirit of togetherness and "bayanihan". Our ability and flexibility to adjust to a drastically changed environment.

The threat of a recession in the United States has become real. This, in turn, will trigger recession in many other countries. As global recession takes its toll, the world will have excess production capacity and exports will slow down.

This crisis is beyond economics. It impacts not only business and industry but the well being of every Filipino. But we have survived worse ones before. There is no reason for us not to surpass this crisis, the worst one since World War II.

It is time for serious reflection. Time to set aside greed, materialism, divisiveness. Tragedy and crisis have a way of changing one's perspective. Business decisions need not be motivated solely by profit. Nor materialism be the sole reason for our existence. **There must be a moratorium on things that divide us. We must focus on things that unite us.**

While we are one with the rest of the world in the war against terrorism, what unites us most at this moment in time is our survival in the midst of a world recession.

During these critical times, we must turn to the domestic economy to make up for the slack in foreign investments and the sharp cuts in exports. Now is the time for everyone to rally behind the country and the economy. **Buying local is not just simply an act of nationalism. It is an act of survival.**

As the President urged in her State of the Nation Address (SONA), **"we have to Think Filipino, Buy Filipino, Invest Filipino"**. That call has never been more urgent than now.

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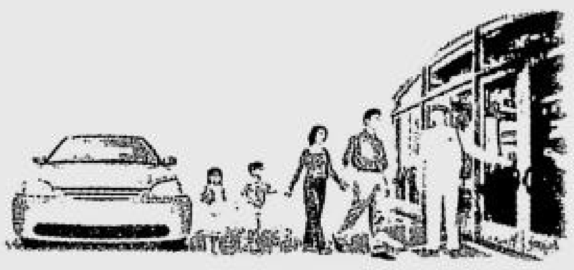

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SAN MIGUEL chairman Eduardo Cojuangco pays a courtesy call on President Macapagal.

Coco farmers want to use levy funds for livelihood

By Cynthia D. Balana

COCONUT farmers are asking the government to allow them to use a portion of the coconut levy fund as livelihood assistance while they are awaiting the final verdict on the coconut levy funds.

Farmers from the Coconut Industry Reform (COIR) Movement Inc. said there was an urgent need for government subsidy to enable them to cope with the present economic crisis.

COIR is a national coalition of national peasant federations and non governmental organizations.

The possibility of using a portion of the sequestered assets financed from the coconut levy fund was raised during Monday's forum on the plunder of the unresolved coconut levy controversy.

They said dividends from the shares of stocks in companies seized by the Presidential Commission on Good Government may be tapped without necessarily touching the principal which is being contested by the group of businessman Eduardo Cojuangco.

Another option, said COIR executive director Joey Faustino, is to use the earnings from the export of coconuts.

Faustino said dividends from the shares of stocks could be used since PCGG representatives sit on the board of these sequestered companies.

Former congressman Wigberto Tañada, president of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM), said he will ask President Macapagal-Arroyo to issue an executive order that will provide livelihood assistance or financial subsidy to these farmers.

"There is no shadow of doubt that it (coconut levy fund) has public character since it was collected by the state and for a specific purpose," Tañada said.

"But it has benefited only a few. Surely, farmers don't deserve just waiting for the resolution of these cases. The government must help them," he said.

The coconut levy and the creation of a fund was imposed by Congress through a law enacted in 1971.

Two years later, then President Ferdinand Marcos increased the levy on the first sale without issuing any receipts to the farmers.

The coconut levy fund now amounts to more than P100 billion. The entire amount is being claimed by Cojuangco and company.

At least 51 percent of the total outstanding capital stocks of San Miguel Corp. comes from the coconut levy fund; 21 percent are being claimed by Cojuangco while the rest are with the United Coconut Planters Bank.

An audit of the total levy fund was conducted in 1986. Since then, the audit has been done annually by each levy-funded corporation.

The PCGG has filed at least eight cases involving the coconut levy issue against the defendants led by businessman Eduardo Cojuangco and other juridical persons still pending before the Sandiganbayan.

The three major cases involved the recovery of the coconut farmers' share at the SMC, UCPB and Bugsuk Island.

The five others involved fund transfer and donations to former first lady Imelda Marcos' pet projects like the Coconut Palace on Roxas Boulevard, Pasay city.

The Supreme Court has ruled that the coconut levy fund was public in character.

In 1993, then President Fidel Ramos commissioned former ambassador Emmanuel Pelaez to come up with an audit of the UCPB funds.

Pelaez was a big trader and a victim of the coconut levy fund scam when it happened during the Marcos regime.

In his report, Pelaez identified which portion of the UCPB funds can be used and the people who benefited from the fund mess.

The Pelaez study also showed Cojuangco and his cohorts did not have a single share of stock in UCPB.

Students should be taught Marcos failed, says Roco

By Blanche S. Rivera and Kira Espino
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

"MARCOS failed. That is what should be taught."

In saying this yesterday, Education Secretary Raul Roco moved to assuage chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government Haydee Yorac, who on Monday assailed education officials for teaching public schoolchildren of Ilocos Norte to revere the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos and letting the children be used in the Marcos family's private commemoration of the dictator's death anniversary.

Roco assured the PCGG that the Department of Education (DepEd) was already looking into the alleged participation of education officials in last week's "Marcos Day" celebration.

He said the DepEd was also reviewing textbooks that might contain "distortions of facts or values" about controversial periods such as the martial law regime presided by Marcos and deposed President Joseph Estrada's term, particularly the impeachment proceedings.

Roco, however, fudged.

He admitted that the DepEd could not control the thoughts of public school teachers and demand they adhere to one interpretation of the contents of textbooks.

"Some people like Marcos, some do not. But whether we like him or not, we have to teach the truth," Roco told a press briefing yesterday.

"And we can't depart from the truth that power deluded Marcos into thinking that his words were true. Marcos failed, and that is what should be taught," he added.

Roco disclosed he had already written Ilocos DepEd regional director Remedios Taguba to ascertain the facts behind Yorac's charges and determine the extent of the participation of Ilocos Norte Supt. Ligaya Miguel, if any, in the death anniversary rites for Marcos on Sept. 28.

Miguel was reported to have tasked public schoolchildren to bring old photos of Marcos, and gather stories of the "greatness" of the deposed dictator, to present as "gifts" to the Marcos family, still the ruling clan in Ilocos Norte.

The children were also reported to have been assigned to participate in the choral competition, storytelling activities and elocution contest held at the Marcoses' ancestral home in Batac.

In a letter to Yorac, Roco also sought the PCGG's "advice on whether the Department of Education should intrude into (these) political beliefs" which regarded Marcos both a great leader and a tyrannical ruler.

"A minority among our people somehow believe that former president Marcos served the country well," Roco said. "From where I stand, they are wrong, but their leaders have campaigned and been elected on that basis."

Roco also insisted in his letter that the DepEd had "no official participation" in the Marcos Day rites.

He said that while he often referred to Marcos as "the most intelligent president," he also believed that Marcos was among those who betrayed the Filipino people.

"There are those however who believe differently, and the strength of democracy lies in our ability to heed plural opinions and tolerate diversity," Roco said in his letter.

In Laoag City, Ilocos Norte Vice Gov. Windell Chua declared yesterday Marcos' achievements "far outweighed" his shortcomings, thus there was nothing wrong in having schoolchildren and Ilocanos in Ilocos Norte commemorate the dictator's life and death.

Chua said he saw "no harm" in allowing schoolchildren to participate in the celebration of Marcos' 12th death anniversary.

"In the Ilocos provinces, particularly in Ilocos Norte, Marcos is revered because of his achievements," Chua told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

Chua, who hails from Batac town , also the former president's birthplace, said Marcos was a "brave patriot who defended the country during World War II."

He also said the former president distinguished himself as a senator.

"As far as Ilocos is concerned, Marcos is a great leader," he said.

Chua branded Yorac a "certified oppositionist" during the Marcos years.

He added adverse criticism regarding the Marcos Day celebrations was a "normal part of life."

"That's life, there are those who believe otherwise," he said.

Schools superintendent Miguel declined to comment on Yorac's statement. Gov. Ferdinand Marcos Jr. was not available for comment.

But an education official in the province said Roco had no knowledge of the school officials' involvement in the celebrations.

The official said when Yorac's statements appeared in the papers, everyone in their office "reacted negatively." He said Ilocanos had a right to celebrate Marcos Day since the late president was from the province.

The official also pointed out that Marcos, who fled the country in the midst of the 1986 Edsa revolt, had never been convicted of any charges.

THIRD ROUND

Gov't, Moro rebs gird for new talks

COTABATO CITY—Government and Moro Islamic Liberation Front negotiators will leave Wednesday for Kuala Lumpur, hoping to resolve with finality questions regarding implementation of the cessation of hostilities.

Undersecretary Jesus Dureza, presidential assistant for Southern Mindanao and government panel chair, said topping the agenda of the Oct. 8 meeting, the third round of peace negotiations, would be the ceasefire agreement, considered by both sides to be a "very thorny issue."

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said the panels could not proceed with discussion of other contentious issues "because of uncertainty over the full implementation of the ceasefire agreement."

Kabalu noted that despite the existence of a truce accord forged in Tripoli, Libya, during the first round of talks, fighting between the two sides still persisted in some parts of Mindanao, especially Maguindanao.

The latest exchange of gunfire occurred on Sept. 29 in Buldon, Maguindanao. Five soldiers and four MILF guerrillas were killed in the battle.

"We are harassed every now and then despite the ceasefire accord," Kabalu told the INQUIRER.

Maj. Julieto Ando, spokesperson of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, said the Buldon incident was "unfortunate," but pointed out that soldiers had responded to reports about the presence of armed groups extorting money from farmers.

He said the soldiers were ambushed along the way triggering a day-long battle. Because the enemy had superior strength, he said, the 6th ID had to use two MG-520 attack helicopters to retrieve the remains of the slain soldiers.

Dureza admitted that both sides could not move forward if the truce was not observed properly by the MILF fighters and soldiers.

"The 3rd round of talks is supposed to discuss the rehabilitation of war-torn areas and the issue of ancestral domain," he said. "It's true we need to iron out this issue to restore normalcy on the ground before we move to the next talking points," he told Radio dxMS from Davao City.

Kabalu said Al Haj Murad, MILF panel chair who is now in Malaysia, expressed concern over the continued violation of the ceasefire accord.

"We cannot continue discussing here while our troops are fighting on the ground," Kabalu quoted Murad as telling MILF chair Salamat Hashim

In Cagayan de Oro City, Col. Santiago Prejido, chief of the 401st Brigade said the military had already filed a protest before the panels, claiming that the MILF was building up its forces in Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte.

Prejido said the brigade filed the protest following the skirmishes in several towns in Lanao del Norte last month.

"Through this (protest), the monitoring team of the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) would be informed. We both had casualties and we don't want to dislocate civilians," Prejido said. *Edwin O. Fernandez with reports from Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

New oil price cut likely

By R. Domingo

A PETROLEUM price rollback of 13 centavos per liter is likely this month, the chair of the Private Sector Consumer and Oil Price Watch said yesterday.

"This is based on the drop in the price of Dubai crude and the appreciation of the peso in September," businessman Raul Concepcion said in news briefing.

Dubai crude prices averaged $24.12 per barrel in September, down 41 cents from $24.53 in August.

The peso averaged P51.27 to the dollar last month, up by 60 centavos from P51.87 last August.

New oil industry players Seaoil and Flying V recently slashed their prices by between 20 centavos and 30 centavos per liter.

Seaoil president Glenn Yu said the rollback was due to a softening of crude and refined oil prices in the world market.

The three oil majors—Petron Corp., Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. and Caltex Philippines—and other new players have not indicated whether they would follow suit.

Petron vice president Antonio Pelayo pointed out that among the local refiners, changes in crude prices would be reflected in pump prices only after a month.

"For the new players who import processed products, changes in world prices could be reflected within a week," Pelayo said.

Concepcion said competitive pressures would determine whether the oil majors would follow Seaoil's and Flying V's example or wait to see how the price of crude and the foreign exchange rate move over the next two weeks.

"But if TotalFinaElf reduces its prices, I think the Big Three would be forced to do the same," Concepcion said.

NEWSBRIEFS

CANADIAN Ambassador Robert Collete awards the McLuhan Prize for Investigative Journalism to Vinia Datinguinoo (second from right) of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism. Joining the Ambassador are managers of Air Canada, Madel Martin (left) and Difas Baird (right).

McLuhan fellow Canada-bound

A FILIPINO investigative journalist will visit Canada for two weeks through the McLuhan Prize for Investigative Journalism to exchange ideas with media counterparts and to explore her areas of interest with prominent members of Canadian government and society.

The Canadian Embassy, in cooperation with Air Canada, the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR), and the Asia-Pacific Foundation of Canada (APFC), recently presented the award to Vinia Datinguinoo of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism.

The current McLuhan awardee won the Jaime V. Ongpin Award and the McLuhan Prize through her series of reports on Estrada and his wealth, which she co-authored with Sheila Coronel and Yvonee Chua.

"Canada is very supportive of empowering investigative journalism in the Philippines. A strong media is essential to a free society, and investigative journalism helps ensure good governance," said Canadian Ambassador Robert Collette.

On her trip to Canada, Datinguinoo will also explore contemporary social and political issues with prominent members of Canadian government and society, including Filipino-Canadian Secretary of State for Asia Pacific, Dr. Rey Pagtakhan. She will fly to Vancouver, Toronto, Quebec City, and Ottawa courtesy of Air Canada from Oct. 5 to 21. She will sit as a fellow at the McLuhan Program for Culture and Technology and will speak at the University of Toronto and the University of British Columbia.

UE marks 55th year

THE UNIVERSITY of the East marked its 55th year on Sept. 27, highlighting the foundation rites with a special tribute to businessman Lucio C. Tan for helping it succeed as one of the country's finest schools of higher education.

As UE chairman P.O. Domingo and president Josefina R. Cortes extolled Tan's industrial acumen, nationalism and philanthropy, the taipan acknowledged his having been privileged to be with the university "in a journey of a thousand miles," the university said in a press statement,

Quoting the popular Chinese saying, Tan said the journey "begins with one step." He stressed that he likes to think he helped UE take one or "maybe even more than one step" to where it stands today among the premier universities of the land.

The alma mater of many top accountants, bankers and business managers, UE cited Tan as a role model for the youth, some of whom are scholars of the Tan Yan Kee Foundation—a philanthropic organization named after Tan's father.

Domingo said Tan's contribution to education encompassed the fine-tuning of teaching methods in English, science and mathematics through the Foundation for Upgrading the Standard of Education (FUSE) which Tan founded and continues to support since the early '90s.

The Tan Yan Kee Foundation, Domingo said, was yet another institution set up by Tan to lend a hand to civic, cultural, disaster alleviation and other humanitarian endeavors.

Thus, the special tribute to Tan, Domingo said, "besides being somewhat overdue… does no more than scratch the surface of what he has done for UE in particular and the nation in general."

Cortes thanked Tan for bailing out the university "when it was about to keel over in a sea of debts" in the '80s. She also acknowledged Tan's help in bankrolling modern facilities and faculty benefits and installing the management team led by Domingo that ushered UE into the age of information technology.

In plucking UE out of distress, Domingo said skeptics jeered Tan "for merely throwing good money after bad." He said Tan is about to do to Philippine Airlines and the Philippine National Bank what it did to UE 15 years ago.

Gloria hits back at critics of laundering law

BUOYED by a US Treasury Department endorsement of the country's newly enacted Anti-Money Laundering Law, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday castigated critics of the crucial measure.

The President said she would wish some Filipinos were not always pointing out defects that they see in the law, as "authorities in other countries say it's a good law."

If Filipinos kept on talking about the law's shortcomings, the international institutions "might come to believe us and put the sanctions on us again," she said in a speech before the Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines.

"I think at a time like this we should be united and not flagellating our country," she said.

A Malacañang statement yesterday said the US Treasury Department had endorsed the new Philippine law to the Paris-based money-laundering watchdog.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said the USTD statement would help in influencing the Financial Action Task Force to remove the Philippines from the FATF's list of 15 uncooperative countries and thus withdraw threats of international financial and trade sanctions on the country.

"This action represents an important step in response to concerns raised by the international community with respect to the Philippines' anti-money laundering regime. We look forward to the (FATF's) expeditious assessment of this law," the USTD was quoted as saying.

Tiglao said the endorsement from the US Treasury Department, which is an important part of the entire world financial community, was significant.

In her speech, the President said that the Philippines remains one of the very few resilient economies in Asia in 2001.

She said that in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 terror attacks in the US, the "likely scenario is a slow recovery" of the US economy.

This would affect Asia and the Philippines in terms of a prolonged slump in exports, she said.

This means that the Philippines must rely on its own economy to weather the crisis, the President said.

Malacañang is still awaiting word from the FATF on whether RA 9160, or the Anti-Money Laundering Act of 2001, sufficiently met its requirements.

RA 9160 was passed and signed into law on Sept. 29, just a day before the FATF deadline.

The new law was published yesterday and will take effect on Sept. 17.

"We expect the FATF to be responding positively in the next few days," Tiglao said.

RA 9160 had been criticized by some sectors as being severely watered-down and would thus not meet FATF criteria. *Juliet Labog-Javellana*

Blair: Time running out on Taliban

(From page A1)

numbered, Musharaff replied: "It appears so."

Pakistan said it would keep trying, even though it saw almost no chance of getting the Taliban to relent.

"Whatever dim hopes are left, possibilities exist. We will remain engaged with the Taliban," foreign ministry spokesperson Riaz Mohammed Khan said.

He said Pakistan had no knowledge about US operational plans for any strike.

Within Pakistan, however, Islamic parties have organized street protests to denounce the government's decision to cooperate with the United States.

Tuesday brought an angry street display in the southwest border city of Quetta.

Several thousand people, some waving sticks, marched through the dusty streets, shouting, "Afghanistan, graveyard of America," and "Any attack on Afghanistan is an attack on Islam."

They waved the black-and-white flags of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam party, which supports the Taliban.

Foreign journalists in the city were confined to their hotel during the protests.

Defiance

Taliban officials have expressed defiance in the face of a potential American military strike. They said Monday that more than 6,500 fresh troops had arrived in Kabul in recent days to bolster defenses there.

Fleeing Afghans, however, said Taliban bands were forcing young men to join their ranks and killing those who refused.

The ruling Taliban militia was trying to woo tribal leaders inside Afghanistan to counter support for the country's exiled former king.

The Taliban announced a power-sharing arrangement with tribes in three key southern provinces, according to the Islamabad-based Afghan Islamic Press.

The report quoted a Taliban spokesperson as saying that tribal representatives would be given posts in the provincial governments of Khost, Paktia and Paktika. Khost was the target of US Tomahawk cruise missiles during an unsuccessful attempt to destroy Bin Laden's training camps in 1998.

On Monday, the former king and an alliance of opposition groups in northern Afghanistan agreed to convene an emergency council of tribal and military leaders as a first step toward forming a new system of government in Afghanistan.

Mohammad Zahir Shah, the 86-year-old ex-monarch, has been living quietly in exile since 1973, and the Taliban have threatened to kill him if he returns.

Russia said last week it would step up its support for the opposition, and larger-than-usual shipments of Russian military equipment have been arriving in recent days in Dushanbe, capital of Afghanistan's northern neighbor Tajikistan.

Russia has been supplying the opposition for the past several years. It also has 25,000 troops of its own stationed in Tajikistan to help guard the border with Afghanistan.

US assistance

In Washington, Bush reported progress in efforts to neutralize Bin Laden and his followers.

"We're going to bring these people to justice," Bush said of terrorists during a visit to the headquarters of the federal agency that oversees disaster aid.

"It's a campaign that must be fought on many fronts, and I'm proud to report that we're making progress on many fronts," he said in his address at the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Bush cited hundreds of arrests in the United States and overseas in the investigation, international cooperation and initial success in seizing assets of Bin Laden and his al-Qaida organization.

Bush said that in the week since he announced a move to freeze assets of Bin Laden and 26 other individuals and organizations, some $6 million had been blocked and 50 bank accounts frozen—30 in the United States and 20 overseas.

He also noted that some 29,000 American troops have been committed to the anti-terrorism effort. As part of US military buildup, the aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk left its base in Tokyo on Monday to join other US forces being positioned for possible action.

"This is a different kind of war. It's hard to fight a guerrilla war with conventional forces, but our military is ready," Bush said.

As part of that effort, Bush approved assistance to groups within Afghanistan that oppose the ruling Taliban militia.

"The purpose of the mission is to eliminate those who harbor terrorists. We will work with a variety of people, all of whom have an interest in establishing an Afghanistan that is peaceful and does not practice terrorism," said White House spokesperson Ari Fleischer.

The effort is separate from a United Nations humanitarian program to help Afghans overcome hardships, and from a new US plan to help Afghan refugees who have fled to neighboring Pakistan.

A senior White House official said the relief aid to refugees could top $100 million.

Earlier, Bush spoke by phone with President Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic and Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad.

In New York, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani appealed to the world to stand fast against terrorism.

"The United Nations must hold accountable any country that supports or condones terrorism or you will fail in your primary mission as peacekeepers," Giuliani told General Assembly representatives from more than 150 countries. *AP*

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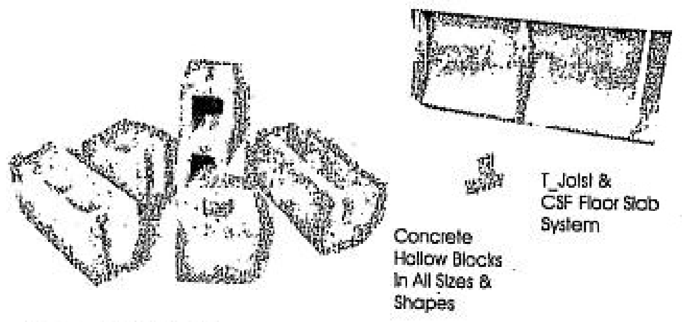
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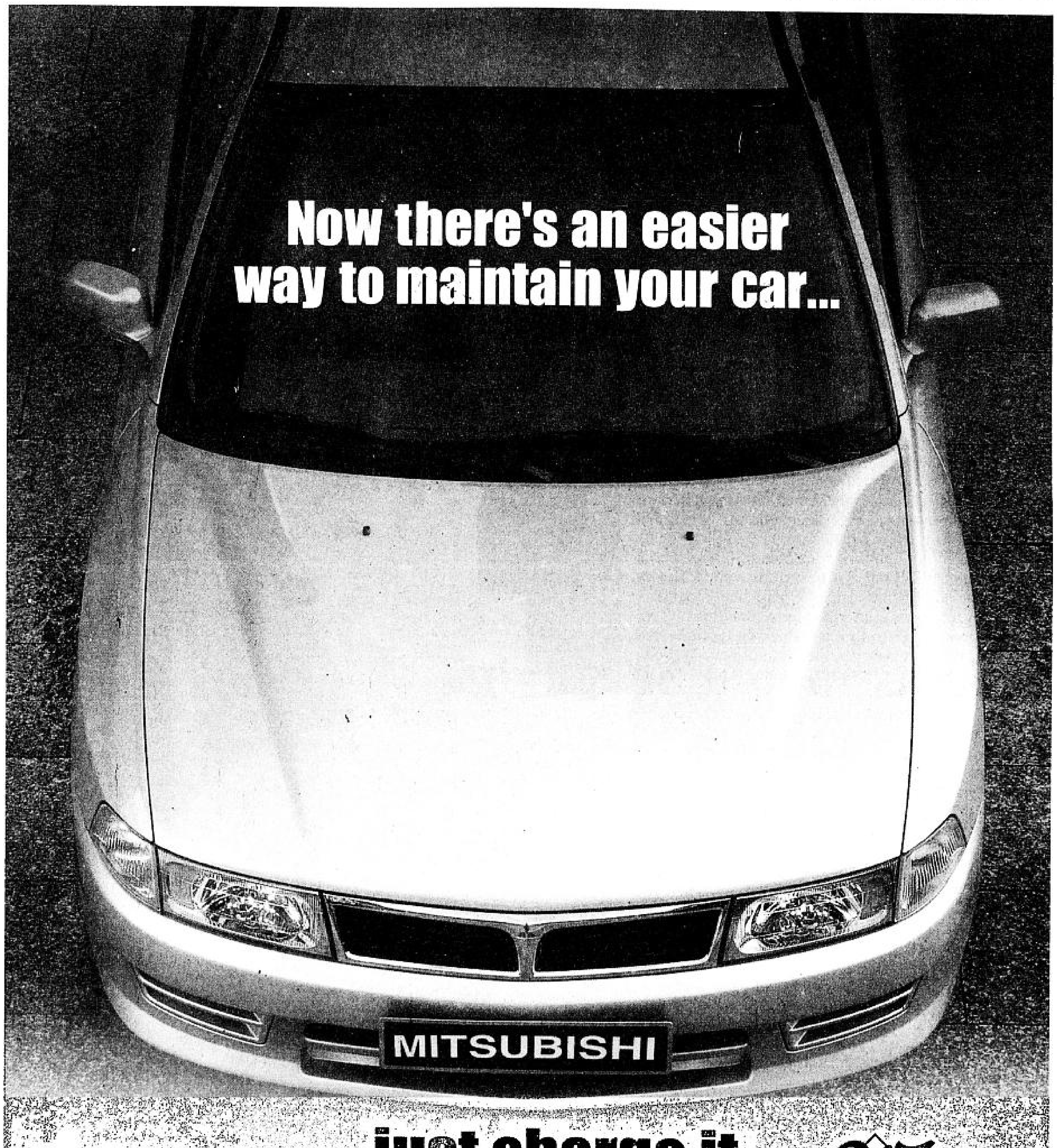

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OPINION

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Acting

EDITORIAL

JOSEPH Estrada, the actor-turned-politician, has gone back to acting. And by playing the same role that catapulted him to fame and the presidency—that of a downtrodden and very ordinary man who triumphs in the end—Estrada is hoping to save his life and win back his freedom.

For the first day of his trial for plunder on Monday, Estrada came dressed like the *masa* he has always claimed to champion. Wearing jacket and jeans, his favorite get-up, Estrada arrived at the Sandiganbayan with only his slippers on. The message he wanted to convey was quite plain to see: he had been bundled out of his suite at the Veterans Memorial Hospital by agents of a government that is in a great hurry to pronounce him guilty. But just in case anyone missed it, he had the script to match his tale of persecution.

In court, Estrada told the three Sandiganbayan justices hearing the case that he was sorry he was dressed so casually. He said he was not prepared to attend the first day of his trial since he had waived his right to be present after the court rejected his lawyers' request to postpone it. The only reason he came, Estrada said, was that he had been threatened by the Ombudsman with being bodily taken to court if he refused to go there. "This is judicial terrorism," he said.

That wasn't his only complaint. He told the court he couldn't understand why it did not grant his lawyer's request for a postponement. "There is no more standard of justice here," he said. When the chair of the Third Division, Justice Anacleto Badoy, said the lawyers of his co-accused Edward Serapio could represent him, Estrada protested that they had not even studied the case against him. "This is the first time I saw them," he said. "How can I get a fair trial in this court?" When told that he should have sought the services of other lawyers, Estrada replied that his lawyers had been studying the case for several months and he couldn't entrust it to a lawyer who had only three days to study it.

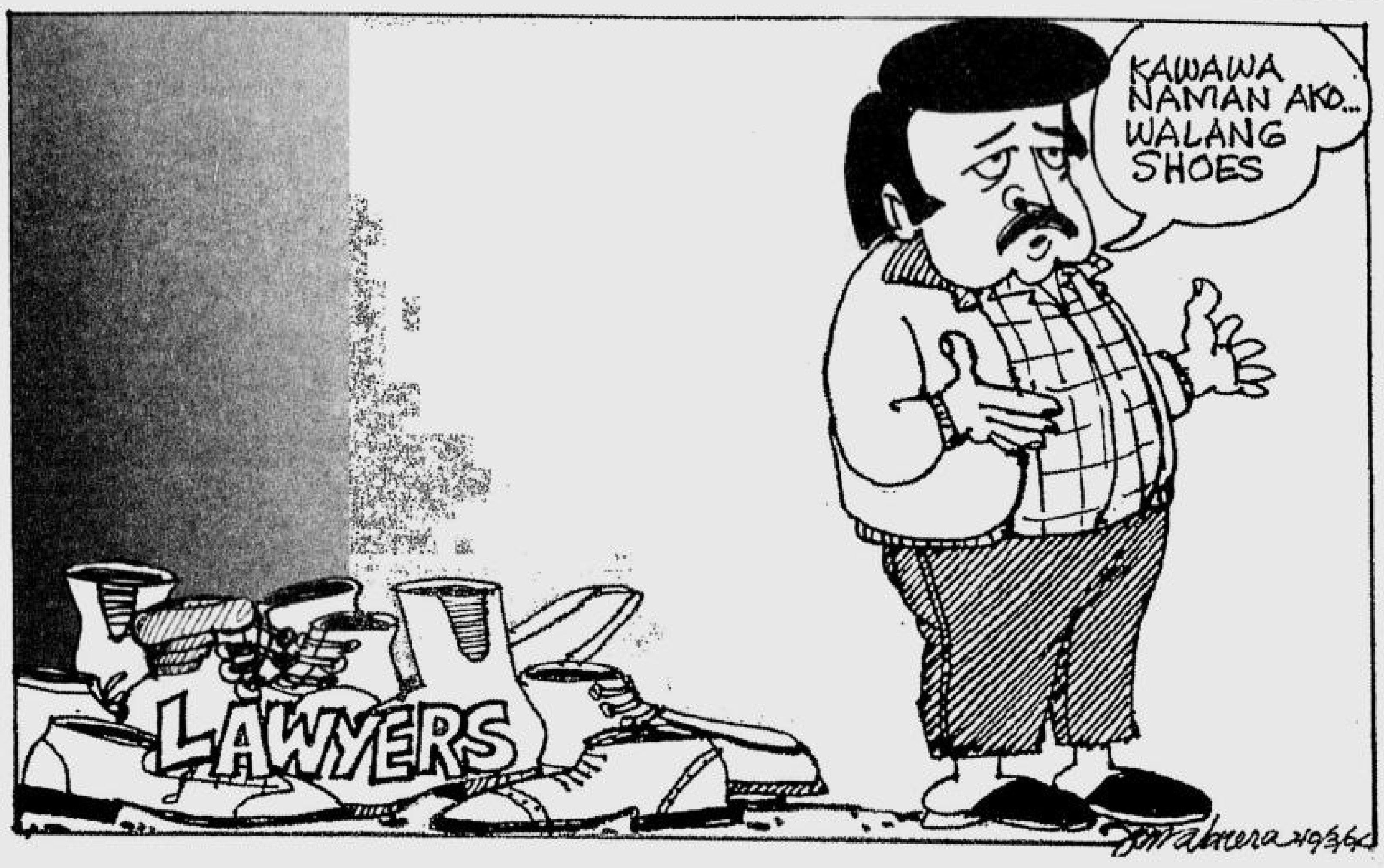
The problem, however, is that while Estrada has engaged the services of a battery of lawyers who found time to study his case, no one could find the time to be present at his trial. Each of his three principal lawyers in the plunder case had an excuse to be absent from Monday's hearing. Rene Saguisag said he had other cases to attend to. Cleofe Verzola said she had to take care of her ailing mother. And Jose Flaminiano said he had to accompany his wife on a religious pilgrimage or something.

Estrada has pointed out, quite correctly, that this particular case (he is facing at least two other charges for perjury and graft and corruption) "involves my life, liberty and honor." His lawyers, however, seem not to see it that way. For if they agree that the stakes are so high and that, indeed, this is a historic trial, surely they would be there to defend their client come hell or high water.

It is, however, highly unlikely that Estrada's lawyers take lightly the task of defending their client. More probably they don't take seriously the justices, the court and even the whole justice system. Otherwise why would they try to stall the trial on such flimsy grounds? Estrada's lawyers have not tried very hard to conceal their contempt for some Sandiganbayan justices, arguing with them heatedly in court and criticizing their decisions in public. Like their client, they have openly expressed their doubts about getting a fair deal and a just verdict from the court. And they have tried every trick to keep the wheels of justice from turning.

It is now clear that the basic defense strategy is to delay the trial. Estrada and his defense team may still be dreaming of a time when they can mount another assault on Malacañang that would bring him back to power and effectively terminate the trial. Maybe they are hoping that the day of judgment will come under a friendlier administration that will work for Estrada's exoneration. Either way, the key is not to have him tried—not now and possibly not ever.

It has often been said that justice delayed is justice denied. That maxim holds true for victims of crimes as well as for the innocent who are wrongfully accused. Estrada has the distinction of being the only person under detention who claims to be innocent but seeks to delay the process of his own vindication. But of course, he could just be acting again, and right now government prosecutors are determined to prove it.


KAWAWA NAMAN AKO... WALANG SHOES
LAWYERS

If you can't win a case, delay it

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

"IF you can't win a case, delay it."

This is a well-known advice to young lawyers from the veterans. The lawyers of former President Joseph Estrada seem to believe wholeheartedly in this advice, judging from their apparent strategy in the plunder case against their client in the Sandiganbayan. They tried mighty hard to derail the first day of trial of Estrada last Monday. They filed several motions in the Sandiganbayan and the Supreme Court to stop the scheduled hearing but the justices were not convinced by their arguments. The tactic is dilatory, according to the prosecution. Only the most naïve will believe that it wasn't.

Estrada has nine lawyers. Not one of them showed up at last Monday's trial. They all have other court appearances, they claim. Coincidence? Guess again.

"We have duties to perform for our other clients," one of them said later on television with a straight face. What about your duty to your biggest client, Estrada? After all, his is the most important case. He faces death by lethal injection if he loses the case. Shouldn't it be given priority? And he probably is paying the biggest fees. Couldn't at least one of the nine have postponed his other case so that he could represent Estrada in the Sandiganbayan last Monday?

But the defendant himself didn't want to go to the trial. He had no intention of going. It was former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa who advised him to go, Estrada said. The prosecution had threatened to carry him bodily to the court. Estrada went so hurriedly, he had no time to put on shoes. He went in his bedroom slippers.

Estrada said he had already filed a waiver not to attend the hearings. A defendant's presence is required only during his arraignment and the reading of the verdict. He can choose not to attend his own trial, he said. So why is the Sandiganbayan's Third Division using "judicial terrorism" to compel his presence?

Answer: Maybe the court is just making sure that the defense will have no excuse to have the whole trial declared null and void on the ground of lack of due process.

Estrada complained: "How can I have justice when my rights were not protected by my absent lawyers." The court had appointed two lawyers as *counsel de officio* for him. But Estrada said they were not familiar with the case. How can they not be familiar when they are lawyers of Atty. Edward Serapio who is Estrada's co-accused in the plunder case?

And while it is true that a defendant can waive his right to be present at his own trial, it is also true that the court can approve or reject that waiver.

Poor Estrada, I feel so sorry for him. For the money he must be spending, I don't think he is getting his money's worth. He claims he is innocent. But he is not behaving like an innocent man. An innocent man will want his trial to proceed as quickly as possible so that he can get out of detention right away. But why are they trying to delay his trial?

You can be sure that his lawyers will inundate media with their complaints against the Sandiganbayan's "judicial terrorism." They will pound the table as they angrily excoriate the justices, especially Justice Anacleto Badoy, chair of the Third Division.

Which reminds me of another advice to lawyers:

"If you have the facts on your side, pound on them. If they are on the other side, pound on the table."

As for dilatory tactics, there's a joke about that, too:

A young lawyer boasted to his father-lawyer that he finished in record time a case that his father had been defending for a long time.

"It was so easy, Dad," he said. "Why did it take you years?"

"My dear boy," replied the father, "that was the case that financed you through law school."

* * *

Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez and Manila Mayor Lito Atienza are stalemated on the Mehan Gardens issue. Atienza claims that the site of the Park and Ride parking building is outside the Mehan Gardens; Alvarez says it is. Atienza dared Alvarez to go to court. If the latter takes the bait, I think he would be outsmarted. In fact, he is being outsmarted right now—if they're not staging a moro-moro.

The construction of the Park and Ride building is going on with utmost speed, night and day, in defiance of DENR's several "cease and desist" orders. The reason is so obvious I don't understand why Alvarez doesn't see it. By the time the boundary of the Mehan Gardens is determined, the building would be finished and any stop order would be academic. Even a court cannot issue an injunction against a *fait accompli*. Atienza used this trick so successfully in the tearing down of the Jai-Alai building.

Just one look at the building under construction will show that it is inside a third of the Mehan Gardens. But just to settle the issue with finality, why don't you get a surveyor to delineate the boundaries of the park.

Simple, *'di ba*?

Miles to go

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

WILL we see another "Edsa III" with Estrada being haled to court?

Not very likely. The psychological mood is different now than before. The brewing war in the Middle East has everyone in the grip of fear. The poor probably more than the rich. It's not that they are less parochial than the rich or are more riveted to global affairs, though that may not be so strange in this magic-realist country. It's that they have family working in that part of the world. If you listen to AM radio, you will get a sense of the extent of the poor's anxiety in that respect. They have been calling, often angrily, to ask what government is doing to help their kin in the Middle East. What kind of evacuation plans are in place, what benefits the overseas Filipino workers might expect from government in case of repatriation, what opportunities for work elsewhere they might pursue.

Some towns in this country were built with OFW money, particularly with OFW from the Middle East. The prospect of losing that lifeblood is terrifying—and heaven help us if, or when, war breaks out in Afghanistan. The capture or death of Osama bin Laden won't end that war, it will mark the beginning of a bigger conflagration in the Middle East, adding fuel to the cause of the fundamentalists, extremists and fanatics there, bringing civil strife to many countries. Pakistan is a prime candidate. Saudi Arabia is not a far second.

No, the fate of one Joseph Estrada won't prey too heavily on the minds of Filipinos these days. His trusted legions included.

Of course Aniano Desierto may prove me wrong. He is just the sort of grandstanding joker (my apologies to the serious one) who can roister the poor into explosions of rage. It is one thing to be resolute, it is another to be reckless. It is one thing to be principled, it is another to be pitiless. It is one thing to look like you will stand your ground amid the swirling storm, it is another to look like you will kick a man when he's down. I do not know that Desierto confines himself to the first.

I would very seriously ask him, and government itself, to remain very, very careful about the images and messages they beam to the public. There is always the danger that the poor may equate, or fuse into one strange conceptual and mythical amalgam, government's neglect of the OFWs with its neglect of them in their own country, government's preferential treatment of Americans and "discriminatory treatment of one of their own," who is Estrada. Bizarre reasoning? Yes. But that is the kind of bizarre reasoning that sparked "Edsa III."

There is another question worth asking, however, and one that is not so easy to answer. That is: Will Estrada's conviction stop, or curb, corruption in this country? Will it have a chilling effect on future plunderers?

Well, first off, whether it stops corruption or not, or whether it has a chilling effect on future plunderers or not, trying Estrada is necessary and laudable. It is not just a matter of deterrence, it is a matter of justice. Where there is crime, there is punishment. Where there is a criminal, there is a jail cell awaiting him. It is so for paupers and kings, it is so for peons and presidents. The demonstration of that principle can have a deep and far-reaching effect on Filipinos. The imparting of that lesson can have a renewing and long-lasting effect on Filipinos. Which could make for a deterrent in the end. The widespread belief or expectation that the law dogs criminals as naturally and inexorably as day follows night does help mightily to deter crime.

But one obstacle stands in its way.

It is the question of whether the prosecution of plunderers will go beyond Estrada to include those who came before him. It is not only Estrada who stands accused of stealing this country blind. Imelda Marcos is. Corazon Aquino, or her relatives and friends, are: they too were believed to have wreaked a scale of pillage that made people forget the Marcoses themselves, or the evil they replaced. Fidel Ramos is: he in particular has been accused of authoring the "mother of all scams," as someone put it then, which is the Amari land deal.

The trial of Estrada is an historic event and sounds a loud and resonant chord about the resolve of this country to do something about the wholesale theft of the people's money. But that can only be the beginning, not the end. A plunder trial that has only Estrada at the heart of it may not put the right lessons across. On the contrary, it may put the wrong lessons across. The message it may give the poor of this country in particular is not that if you are guilty, you will be punished, however high up you are. It is that if you are not *malakas* with this government, you will be punished, whether you are low or not.

For all the bedlam and cacophony of "Edsa III," that was the kernel of truth that welled up from it like a water lily from the mud and slime, the question, "Why **only** Estrada?" It is a valid question, and one that cannot be left hanging for very long. We convict Estrada without even trying to at least cast a curious eye on the plunder that went on before him, and we thwart the import of this trial. We produce not a sense of renewal among the citizens, but a sense of cynicism among them.

We fan the flames of an attitude that has made not just corruption but a host of evils possible in this country, which is the attitude of being content with token or ritualistic gestures. I do not know where we get that attitude—I suspect it comes from our brand of Catholicism, with its ritual expiation of sin after token confessions, or worse, after self-flagellation one day out of one year—but it is something that has blighted us for so long. We rise heroically to topple a tyranny one day, and lapse to blindness while tyranny creeps back and rebuilds itself brick by brick, mortar by mortar. We have done our duty, we have made our grand gesture, we can go back to normal. We have done our duty, we have jailed Estrada, we can go back to sleep.

Ah, but we have miles to go before we sleep. And miles to go before we sleep.

Seamstresses and laundresses

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

IN DEFENDING her decision to allow the United States forces to use its former bases in Subic and Clark as transshipment platforms of military supplies, of troops and for refueling of aircraft in support of attacks on terrorist havens in Afghanistan, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has overstated her case.

The overstatement came in the form of an assurance that the temporary presence of American troops would not revive prostitution on the margins of the former bases, saying that the Visiting Forces Agreement provided mechanisms that would guard against what camp followers have welcomed as a windfall from her policy of committing this country to the international coalition to combat terrorism.

The assurance was issued to calm anxieties over the rebirth of the hospitality industry that once fed on the bases and that gave employment to the local economy in the towns surrounding the bases.

Of all her arguments, this assurance is the most insipid and should be a cause for embarrassment for her, the reason being that it detaches her from the facts of life wherever soldiers are bivouacked.

While catching up with my readings on history during the weekend, I came upon an amusing account of the behavior of soldiers in the Napoleonic Wars in the book, "La Grande Armee," by George Blond, (1997, English edition), from Austerlitz (1805) to the invasion of Moscow (1812). Prior to the campaign in Russia, the Grande Armee had swept Europe and had seemed invincible. I commend this to readers for the purpose of having a reality check on the things that make camp life bearable to the troops. According to the book:

"The *Moniteur Universel* wrote discreetly of the dives clustered at the camps' approaches for the repose and pleasure of warriors. In fact, one could find there, as in the town, every variety of prostitution. From time immemorial women had followed the armies. Under the *ancien regime* they comprised in principle the wives of the sutlers (camp follower) and artisans authorized to follow the armies in their little cars; officially they were laundresses and seamstresses.

"Many of them remained faithful to their men, but some were mere soldiers' molls and these became more numerous during the wars of the Revolution (the Motherland in danger did not prevent the voice of humanity from making itself heard).

"A decree of the Convention (8 March 1793) 'authorized soldiers' in vague terms 'to form alliances in marriage without the assent of their superiors' (i.e., any sort of free union was authorized in the army). Moral: a month later, Carnot wrote from Dunkirk to the executive council: 'A terrible scourge is destroying our armies. This is the mass of girls and women who follow them: one must reckon that they are as numerous as soldiers. The barracks and billets are crammed with them and the dissolution of morals is at its height these women weaken the troops and destroy them by disease 10 times more than those who succumb to the enemy.'

"Bonaparte, commander of the Army of Italy, was upset by this officially authorized brothel and in August 1796 published an order: 'Women caught at the head of the army and headquarters or in billets will be daubed black, paraded through the camp and expelled from its precincts.'

"The order proved effective for all of two weeks, the free-and-easies following docilely behind the columns, but let the army halt for merely 48 hours and they were all back. Some dozens of the cleverest or the most appreciated even managed to embark for Egypt as 'seamstresses and laundresses by profession' or by disguising themselves as soldiers. In such manner, Pauline Foures, young and newly married to a lieutenant of mounted chasseurs, won fame as the mistress of the commanding general during the campaign; he almost married her on the day when he learned of the infidelity of Josephine...

"There is, naturally, no official record of the numbers of soldiers' wenches present during the various campaigns. One can judge that the high command tried constantly to reduce the damage and to constrain the feminine tide. But it is common knowledge that nothing keeps down prostitution.

"Raoul Brice has observed: 'Young, vigorous men, ardent soldier-fashion, when resting in garrisons or camps, cannot restrain their senses. On the contrary, women are the only target of their desires. They fight among themselves to seduce them; they aspire to heroism, glory and riches in order to please. While officers in love exhibit refined tastes and delay following their hearts, no such superfluous delicacy restrains simple soldiers. The latter have an appetite perhaps more robust and less delicate and seek an immediate attainment of their desire. They appeal to the licentious, to girls whose inclination is to be wedded to the crowd; they are the consorts of the troopers, sought after as the wine runs out at soldiers' debauches when their excited senses seek relief...'

"Brice was closer to reality when he wrote: 'The Grand Armee encountered venereal diseases everywhere in Europe and had long marched with them, cultivating them on the fertile soil of prostitution and harvesting their fruits itself...'

"Throughout the ages, there has been no mass of females comparable to these followers of the Grande Armee, whose carriages in their thousands jolted through the dust, the mud and the snow."

Troop behavior has not changed, regardless of the nature of wars—i.e., whether armies endured long marches or were stationed at fixed forward strategic bases in Asia-Pacific. We now call these ambulant female colonies the R and R centers.

President Macapagal and those who had railed at the VFA because of this reason may have dreaded the day when the dives at Dao, Angeles City and Olongapo and their underground service economy will spring back to life but this war on international terrorism will certainly not be won or lost in the brothels.

Consumer concerns

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THE POOR Filipino consumer! Yesterday, the papers were full of notices from airlines addressed to "valued customers" and the "flying public" informing them that because of the increase in premiums for third party liability insurance for airlines around the world, passengers would be "assessed" a surcharge of P300 each starting Oct. 1.

News about the dire straits that airlines found themselves in had figured prominently in the wake of the Sept. 11 disasters, true. And indeed there were rumblings of sympathy when it was announced that airlines and airplane manufactures would be forced to lay off hundreds of employees as a result of losses incurred in the aftermath of Sept. 11. But would we have been as sympathetic if we had known we would be shouldering part of the burden?

When and by whom was this surcharge decided and permitted? Where will the amount go? How was the final amount of P300 per passenger determined?

Though the notices were lavish in their expressions of concern and quite detailed about what types of tickets were subject to the surcharge (in sum, all), they were woefully short on background and explanations. As far as I know, airline passengers were not consulted about this matter. Were hearings even held by the concerned government agencies, and were the voices of consumers even heard in the course of the deliberations?

It seems that consumers in the Philippines figure in the calculations of businesses only at the end, when it's time to pay. I don't remember seeing notices about a *planned* surcharge on all types of airline tickets, while there was still time for consumer advocates to weigh in with their own figures and calculations.

So forgive me if I cast a jaundiced eye at the hand wringing these notices would like us to believe went on at the airline offices. Given their contemptuous treatment of the market, I can believe they were rubbing their hands in glee instead.

* * *

WHICH brings me back (way back) to the already-underway cutbacks in the allotment of free text messages to cell phone subscribers and pre-paid users.

The decision to cut by as much as three-fourths the number of free text messages included in various cell phone packages was merely announced as a fait accompli by Smart and Globe in nearly simultaneous press conferences. Before this, no consultations were held, and no prior warnings were aired. When the largely youthful cell phone market protested, the phone firms merely responded by saying text messaging was not within the purview of a public utility franchise, and so was beyond the jurisdiction of any regulatory body.

In *bagets* speak: Butt out, this isn't any of your *&#+ business!

The only time Globe and Smart bothered to address their consumers directly on the issue was after the TRO issued by a local court was lifted, and the two giants decided to push ahead with the free text reduction plan. They published full-page ads addressed to, again, their "valued consumers" telling them they would be losing more than half of their free text allocations. Yeah right, we're so valued we're not even consulted when the service we're paying for is effectively diminished.

* * *

IT'S like Meralco telling us that because they want to conserve profit, they will be providing us with only half a day's worth of electricity but charging us a full day's rate. Or like renting an apartment with a garage, only to be told later by our landlord that the garage was a free perk, and that he now needed it to house his sari-sari store. I mean, where's the justice in this world?

Young cell phone users, banding together in a coalition called Txt Power, impressed us early on when they managed to get a judge to issue a TRO on the phone giants. But they seem to have lost steam and were never heard from again after the TRO was lifted and the text reduction scheme was activated. Was it compassion and righteous anger fatigue, or a symptom of Gen X's notorious short attention span?

A day before the cell phone boycott called by the protesters, I reminded my children about turning off their cell phones to protest the arrogance of the cell phone giants. "But I need my cell phone!" my teen-age daughter protested. "You're the ones who're mad at the companies. I don't mind the free text cuts!" "The only reason we're joining this," I coolly reminded her, "is that we support consumer rights. This is your fight, in fact. And the only reason you don't mind the text cuts is that I am the one paying for your subscription!"

It's a good thing Edsa II lasted just three days. Had it lasted any longer, our young protesters might have gotten bored and wandered off to watch a movie.

* * *

SPEAKING of cell phones, there's a dire text message making the rounds, warning us to stay away from churches, markets, theaters, malls and other crowded places because alleged Muslim terrorists are planning a series of terrorist bombings in Manila. It ends with the usual pleas to "pass this on."

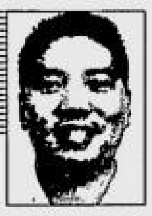
Now there's a counter-campaign not just to NOT pass on the message, but also to spread counter-messages of solidarity with and understanding for our Muslim brothers and sisters.

In the first place, is it accurate, not to mention fair, to describe these alleged terrorists as "Muslim"? A Muslim leader had a point when he protested the use of the term "Muslim terrorists," saying that when the Irish Republican Army claims credit for a bombing or attack, they're described as "IRA terrorists" and not as "Catholic terrorists."

So why can't we say "Abu Sayyaf" or even "Al-Qaeda" terrorists, instead of linking Islam wholesale to the work of a fanatic fringe?

Racial profiling

LOOKING BACK



Ambeth R. Ocampo

WHEN abroad a Filipino naturally feels out of place. Aliens in a foreign land, they are sensitive to racial discrimination and profiling. In the United States black and Hispanic males complain that they are stopped more often by police than white or Asian drivers. It sometimes pays to be Asian abroad like the days of the hit TV series "Kung Fu," when muggers stayed away from Asians assuming that all of them were martial arts experts.

After the World Trade Center bombing many Filipinos have grown suspicious of Middle-Eastern and Indian foreigners. We were eating in a restaurant recently where an Indian man was preparing bread and someone in our party asked, *hindi ba* terrorist *yan*? Though said in jest it seems that anyone with a beard and turban (except Madam Auring of course) is a suspect. One source for this irrational behavior is media that freely uses the term "Muslim terrorist" as if these two terms come together. Ever heard of a "Buddhist terrorist"? What about a "Vegetarian terrorist"? Media is so loose when it comes to profiling. Reading about trouble in Ireland do they describe bombers and snipers as "Roman Catholic terrorist" or "Protestant terrorist"? The poor Muslims are being singled out for the transgressions of a few misguided people who happen to share their religion.

Philippine history follows the same pattern. Centuries of Spanish colonization has developed a bias against Muslims from Mindanao (that were never conquered by Spain) and Chinese that remains with us to this day. Despite driving the Moors out of Spain in the late 15th-century the so-called "Catholic Kings" of Spain pushed a mind-set that traveled all the way to the Spanish Philippines where the term *Moro* (from moor) soon became synonymous with piracy. Historical sources are more biased toward *moros* than Christian pirates.

Since much has been written about the racial and religious discrimination against Muslim Mindanao I decided to write about another sector of Philippine society that has been subjected to racial profiling too—the Chinese. The fact that I cannot decide whether to use Chinese-Filipino or Filipino-Chinese, or Chinoy to refer to Filipinos of Chinese ancestry illustrates how confused I am. If a person is born and raised in the Philippines even with Chinese parents why can't he or she be simply tagged a Filipino without reference to his ancestry? If you add Chinese to Filipino the connotation changes.

Being a martial law baby one of the images that remains in my mind is that of Lim Seng, a drug pusher executed by firing squad. Surely there were Filipino drug pushers in jail, why the fuss over Lim Seng? Thus, like many martial law babies I had a quick lesson in racial profiling. As a historian I go way before 1972 and in pre-war newspapers and magazines I found so many anti-Chinese news items most of which concerning hygiene. Fernando Amorsolo drew a four-frame cartoon on the Chinese showing: *bakit masarap ang tsokolate* (Chinese man kneading chocolate into rolls his sweat dripping all over them); *bakit masarap ang tira-tira* (Chinese man masticating the sweet, pulling it out of his mouth and forming them into strips); *bakit masarap ang pancit langlang* (Chinese cook scooping a cat out of the pot with a ladle). Even today you will hear jokes about cat meat in the siopao that should rightfully be called sio-meow.

A 1926 issue of the Philippines Free Press featured "Los Chinos y Microbios," actually two articles on hygiene and the Chinese. In a vain effort to be fair, one article was pro-Chinese the other anti-Chinese. Of course, the latter won out because of the illustrations that showed Chinese eating and spitting on a shirt in a laundry. When interviewed, a certain Dr. Schobel of the Oficina de Ciencias stated that in his 15 years as bacteriologist he encountered few cases of cholera and other digestive disorders among the Chinese residents in the Philippines. His lab tests proved that contrary to popular belief Chinese had few harmful bacteria in their systems. Despite their outward appearance Chinese were clean and their stomachs free of dysentery, cholera and parasites since they never took food that was not hot or well-cooked. Furthermore, they drank more tea than water. Dr. Schoebel argued that the Chinese had a high concept of hygiene and sanitation.

But then the other article was on the decision of a Manila judge condemning Kong Oh Chen to pay a P10 fine (or imprisonment if he could not or refused to pay) for the illegal use of "sopletes" in his Chinese laundry. The "soplete" was a like a straw that when blown into sprayed water on cloth before ironing. Watching our *planchadoras* they either sprinkled water with their fingers, used a wet towel, or used a spray gun. In 1926 this ingenious Chinese invention was blamed for the spread of disease. Water and saliva were spread on clothes, but then wouldn't the heat from the iron finish them off? It was argued that germs were smart and hid under buttons and other places not reached by the iron. There was a call for Chinese to advertise "Microbios gratis!" Looking at history we see that not much has changed in the way we treat Chinese. One does wonder if we ever learn from history at all.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

Asthma, and worse

HIGH BLOOD

Minyong Ordoñez

WE'D also like to know the concerns of the sixtysomething and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit back, content that all's well with their world and with themselves. **—Ed.**

TO my consternation, I got asthma at the late age of 63. The culprit, according to my doctor, was diesel fumes, the dirty fuel that's omnipresent in our streets. It's in the air we breathe, in micro particles. It sticks to walls of buildings and houses. It's impossible to avoid it.

The most battered internal organ in my body is my lungs. For the last 50 years, my lungs have fought most of its deadly attackers and destroyers. Name it. TB bacilli, bronchitis, cold, and flu bacteria and viruses of different strains, and recently, asthma allergens.

Most lung problems result in inflammation or irritation of air passages causing shortness of breath due to obstructions in the air passages. If there's an infection, the lung can deteriorate and lead to death as an acute case of pneumonia.

Smoking can cause emphysema, a kind of permanent damage wherein parts of the lungs become atrophied and permanently immobilized. An emphysema sufferer is forever short of breath and will feel like he's drowning at the slightest movement. There is no cure for emphysema. The other notorious and fatal disease is cancer cause by cigarette smoking. (I quit smoking 20 years ago.)

Recently, I had a one week stint at the Makati Medical Center and it was a total war. Dragging myself to the emergency room, I could hardly breathe, my strength completely gone. The doctors admitted me for confinement right away. Aside from asthma attacks, my x-ray showed bronchitis and signs of pneumonia, a potential killer.

My team of doctors used the total approach. For fast action, several intravenous medications took effect to kill bacteria and viruses. To continuously unclog constricted air passages, I inhaled nebulizers through the mouth and oxygen in my nose, all these were simultaneously done and monitored as my blood pressure and heart beat.

Toward the fifth day, a new villain in my lungs was discovered. The thing sounds intimidating: pulmonary embolism.

Embolism are tiny blood clots which block blood flow in the passage ways of the lungs causing me to starve for oxygen. Embolism can zap my strength totally, I'll fall to the ground like a dry leaf. My long flight (18 hours) from Boston to Manila the week before caused embolism. Immobile legs were a prime factor, since the clots happened in the primary veins of the legs. Not to worry, there's an injection and a pill for it; an anticoagulant, something that melts congealed blood.

After one week, my doctors and their team won the war. Bacteria and viruses were eliminated. No infections. Air passage began to loosen. The clots due to embolism melted. I'm back in shape. My lungs won again.

The lung is one of our most magnificent organs. It's a large organ occupying the biggest expanse in our chest. It has two main lobes that breathe rhythmically, taking the air we inhale, letting oxygen seep into its many major airways called bronchus and a myriad of minor ones called bronchioles to nourish the life of our cells.

A marathon runner can win the race because of his lungs' endurance. When we are infatuated, we sigh with our lungs.

The lungs is also one of the most delicate and trouble-prone organs since it is the receiver of germs, viruses and allergens carried in the air we breathe.

My lungs became the crux of my health and existence since I got sick with TB at 13. For a boy who's crazy about basketball and whose ambition was to play at the NCAA, having TB was a total disaster.

I felt that dying at 13 was so cruel. I knelt often at the church crying, begging to God to let me live till I'm 20. I wanted to experience manhood. I didn't want to die a boy.

TB is something of a scourge in my father's family history. In the late '30s, my father died of TB when I was still a one-year-old baby. According to my late *Inay* Aurea, my father cried in his death bed because he was leaving me orphaned. My father's brothers and sisters also died of TB while in their 20s. Even famous people died of TB; Mark Twain, Oscar Wilde, Elizabeth Barett Browning, St. Therese of the Child Jesus and our own president, Manuel Quezon. TB was a sentence to death. Antibiotics were not yet discovered in their time.

The discovery of streptomycin in the '40s saved me. Curing TB was a yearlong process of rest and medication and I had to abort my studies, spending long vacations to recuperate in my *lola's* orange farm in the windy hills of Pililla, Rizal.

Resuming my studies after the cure gave me a lot of hope. But the disease could recur and did.

When I was 18, I vomited blood and the doctors at Quezon Institute found out I had holes in my lung. The phrenic nerve in my neck had to be cut and immobilized to prevent bleeding. I was out of school again for another year. I got cured and went back to school again to finally finish college.

When I joined advertising in 1961, my scourge vanished completely. For 25 years, I was a workaholic, enjoyed the nightlife, played a lot of basketball, joined 10 km. fun runs, and no TB! I even got married in 1967 and raised a healthy family.

I got widowed in 1984, played a lot of tennis, dated gorgeous women, raised my two daughters by playing dual roles of mom and dad. I got married again in 1991, and I am, at present, raising another family.

Three years ago, I became asthmatic. After eliminating such allergens as cats, pillows, knats, mites, dust, carpets, pollens, sea foods, etc. my doctor surmised that my asthma was due to diesel fumes. The high density of toxic fumes in our main streets has resulted in epidemic proportions of asthma cases in children, adults and old people. To manage asthma, I rely on pump inhibitors and pills that prevent constriction of my lung's air passages.

The battle goes on. My doctor tells me if worse comes to worst, I can still live with one lung. Hooray! Forty-five years ago, I asked God to give me just five years life extension. I'm now on my 50th year bonus. *Salamat po, Diyos ko.*

What other elements contribute to my longevity? It must be the genes on my mother side. My grandmother, a sturdy barrio woman lived to her 90s. My mother, another durable woman, reached 89. I'm optimistic, my lungs can win more battles. Longevity is in my genes.

Minyong Ordoñez, chair and CEO of Basic Advertising

THEY SAID

Heroic flyers

"They likely saved our world from an even darker day and more unthinkable horror."

—Actor Tom Hanks said in honoring passengers of the hijacked plane that crashed in Pennsylvania

Not a hasty fight

"Terrorism has been condemned and always will be condemned, but the fight against terrorism should not be hasty."

—Prayer leader Mohammad Yazdi

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LETTERS

Does media abet terrorism?

THE TERRORIST attacks in the United States only shows that even the most powerful nation in the world is not safe from shadowy figures whose agenda is to magnify differences between rival factions and ethnic groups. This is why President George W. Bush is asking every nation and every individual opposing terrorism to do their share to support the Americans in the war against terrorists.

It can no longer be denied that wars of attrition are being engineered in nation-states where large groups of people with ethnic and religious differences live, such as our country. Unity, therefore, is the call of the hour. We must get our acts together and not depend on other people or agencies to do it for us. The lesson of Yugoslavia is too recent to forget. The Slavs and the Serbs have been slugging it out for years, "under the eyes of NATO and UN observers." Yet, the war between them just goes on and on.

Mass media plays a crucial role in our battle against terrorism. Experience shows that terrorism is viewed as political theater performed for audiences. It will continue to be seen as such for as long as it enjoys massive news coverage. "Corporate media" should, therefore, refrain from biased reporting in favor of terrorists. The success behind the publicity rationale undergirding political violence is too universal to deny.—**ERICK SAN JUAN, Suite 1402, 1st e-Bank Tower, 8737 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City**

Another encounter with tow trucks

I WISH to call attention to the way the Jazz Towing Co., located at Langaray Street, Dagat-dagatan, Navotas, goes about its predatory business.

This irritating incident happened last Sept. 29, 2001 in Caloocan City. At around 3 p.m., my driver, was driving an Isuzu Elf truck along 4th Avenue, Grace Park. He stopped for a while and got off to check on what was causing an abnormal noise under the vehicle. When he was about to board the truck, men from the Jazz Towing Co. headed by a certain Mario called him. When he approached them, two of the members of the group immediately boarded the vehicle and told him that he was parked illegally so they are going to tow the truck. When my driver resisted he was charged with arrogance and they took his T.O.P. (which they later denied that they took because they never returned it) and proceeded to their garage in Langaray Street, with our towed vehicle.

I would like to call the attention of Caloocan City Mayor Rey Malonzo. There are vultures in our midst waiting to snoop down on hapless victims. We are legitimate business people. We pay our taxes and we make a decent living. Incidents of this nature at the hands of people like those from Jazz only waste our time and keep us from doing useful and productive work. Surely, something can be done about towing companies like the above?—**ILUMINADA D. NOCOM, 5 King Alexis St., Kingspoint Subd., Bagbag, Novaliches, Quezon City**

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Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

DAR clarifies ICSI report

THE INSTITUTE on Church and Social Issues has done it again. It has attacked the new management of the Department of Agrarian Reform based on complaints lodged by a non-government organization called Task Force Mapalad. For the second time, ICSI has questioned the capability of the new DAR team in implementing the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

We, thank ICSI for taking up the cudgels for the Filipino farmers who have yet to reap the benefits of the agrarian reform program. We believe that civil society groups have every right to champion the causes of the underprivileged sectors. However, we would appreciate it very much if ICSI first checked the veracity of the information supplied by their sources before printing their accusation.

ICSI, in the column titled "Unresolved issues of CARP" last Sept. 28, 2001, alleged that the DAR has grown tired of listening to the complaints of Filipino workers. Andrea Soco wrote that the DAR Central Office kept its door closed to farm workers and to those advocating their cause. She cited as an example the complaint of lawyer Mabel Arias, who was allegedly barred from entering the DAR offices to represent farmers affiliated with Task Force Mapalad.

Soco also alleged that nobody among the DAR officials bothered to hear the complaints of the farmers during their nine-day camp-out in front of our office.

Had the writer checked the facts with us, she would have known that all these allegations are lies peddled by Task Force Mapalad.

Soco was correct when she mentioned that Undersecretary Virgilio delos Reyes conducted a dialogue with farmers from Negros Occidental immediately after the Task Force Mapalad decided to hold a camp-out at the DAR Central Office. What she missed was that the dialogue did not end on that day. Almost on a daily basis, officials of DAR kept themselves busy talking not only with the Negros farmers but also with farm workers from Batangas and Mindoro who were also affiliated with Task Force Mapalad.

With regard to the complaint of Arias, our security officers informed us that they were merely implementing normal security measures when they checked the vehicle carrying the lawyer and a female companion. Apparently, the guards didn't know that for Arias, leaving her ID in exchange for a visitor's pass is a humiliating experience and a violation of human rights.

Soco also claimed that Agrarian Secretary Hernani Braganza "seems to be powerless in the face of landowners who are intent on keeping their estates that they employ heavily armed guards to prevent farm workers from claiming the land." Yet, she acknowledged that under Braganza's leadership, the DAR was able to help a number of farmer-beneficiaries settle in three "contentious" haciendas in Negros Occidental—Hacienda Fami, Hacienda Agueda and Hacienda Espinos—after five long years of waiting.

Now, Ms Soco is complaining that the DAR's success was short-lived as the farmers eventually had to leave the land due to threats and harassment from the former landowners.

We wish to assure her that the DAR will continue to consider the Negros provinces as priority areas in CARP implementation. That means the DAR will pour in more budget and human resources in Negros to complete land distribution.—**FACUNDO O, PALAFOX V, head executive assistant, Department of Agrarian Reform, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City**

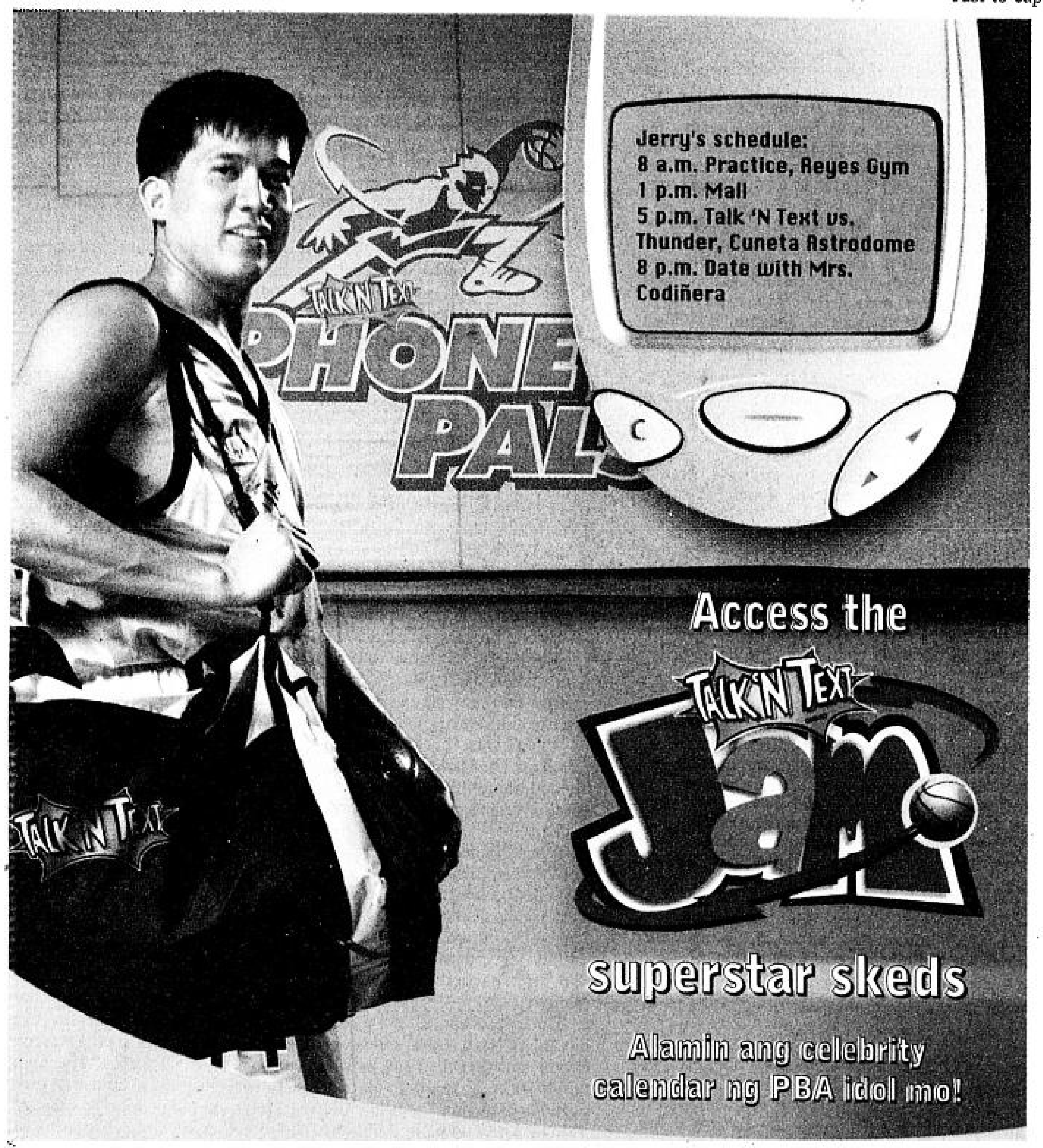
US retribution should be swift and focused

A REPORT last Sept. 25, 2001 said that US President George W. Bush signed an executive order to stop the flow of money funding terrorist operations. So far, this executive order is one of best moves of Bush.

Resorting to military force would be incalculably destructive of many lives and properties. And for what? Just to capture one man. This will only immortalize the name of Osama bin Laden, and that should not be allowed to happen, for immortalizing a terrorist will only breed more terrorists in the future.

If biological or chemical attacks will be used to capture Bin Laden and his ilk, so many lives will be lost. It is much better to focus on the positive and pro-active. Retribution or vengeance should be very focused and very swift so that collateral damage is limited.

Rebuilding what has been destroyed, including the industries affected, should get greater attention and financial assistance, as well as long-term programs to prevent future tragedies of the nature of Sept. 11.—**JOE M. ALIM, Donsol, Sorsogon**


Jerry's schedule:
8 a.m. Practice, Reyes Gym
1 p.m. Mall
5 p.m. Talk 'N Text vs. Thunder, Cuneta Astrodome
8 p.m. Date with Mrs. Codiñera
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Yan ang galing without overspending!
SMART

The business of war

A CROOKED reaction can never straighten out a crooked action. Beneath it, must be a crooked motive.

The Bush administration's coalition of warmongers must realize that the global objective must be peace with justice, and not vengeful retaliation. A military action doesn't answer the noble requirements of life such as social progress with social justice.

The perpetual demands of the afflicted peoples are higher wages, healthcare benefits, quality education and the like. These are the very services often crippled by the US economic policies. Social security and social services are the most efficient weapons to combat terrorism. Definitely not the bullets and bombs of the allied forces or an economic embargo by the First World countries.

An all-out war policy would only multiply the scores of the homeless, hungry, sick and the dead but ultimately decrease the opportunities for a bright future from scarce to nil.

Then, why war and whose interest is it anyway?

Warmongering is profitable.

War or even a military build up is an event big enough for profit thirsty material suppliers to urge Mr. Bush to wage war in exchange for funds in his reelection bid in 2005. American politics has been revolving in this manner since 1939. Ever since World War II, waging war has been America's favorite profit booster. Military production has increased by unimaginable percentages and has pumped in trillions of dollars to companies manufacturing varied war materials from bullets to helicopters, from parachutes to combat boots.

With the aircraft industry going bankrupt and the whole industrial world already on the brink of recession, companies such as Boeing, Colt and General Dynamics have their gears and hopes up to seal business deals in exchange for the lives of the innocent.

Only the individual capitalists of war materials will gain from an event such as war.

Now, what is the logic to all the mindless spending and President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's position to support the war effort of an imperialist bigot such as Mr. Bush?—**JESS EVIDENTE, member, Sanlakas, 92 Masikap Ext., Bgy. Central, Quezon City**

Simple solutions to complex headaches

LAST Sunday I read Cardinal Sin's letter at Mass in the Santuario de San Antonio. It moved me to write to evolve a temporal mode to its spirituality. We can always pray but God listens to those who walk their talk or do as much (or as well) as they say.

So I propose the following simple solutions to our complex problems:

ID system—We should have done this a decade ago. In California, when you apply for a driver's license, you get a California ID and the drivers license when you pass both written and behind the wheel test—with the same number. Your SSS number marks down everything.

On garbage—Let us repeal the Clean Air Act to lift the ban on incinerators. Whoever lobbied for banning this universal solution to garbage (you see incinerators in the heart of Sydney, New York, London, etc.) must have earned millions in garbage truck hauling, etc.

On traffic—Well, we can reduce the number of vehicles on the road like this—ban all busses along Ayala Avenue. Designate bus terminals outside the business district. Provide transport from point to point and ask the Ayalas to run trains around their territory. The ultimate solution to this is the proposal of a friend: distribute the colleges and universities to the provinces to stop the population of students from rising each year in Metro Manila.

On government—Well, we do not need the authors of the Federalist Papers to wage a campaign for a Federal form of government here. It was adapted by a confused nation more than a century ago. Today they remain the United States of America.

On the environment—If we get a good government, we get a good environment! Or why not get all those guys we sent to study and train abroad on the different environment fields to put their heads together to tackle the foul air all around us?

We do not deserve all this. Garbage, traffic, foul air, bad governance. For those of us fortunate enough to see the year 2000 and still be alive, we owe it to our children to do something. So that they may live longer and perhaps better than we will.—**FRANCIS C. NERI, Neri Townhouses and Condominium, 4423 Montojo St., Bo. Tejeros, Makati City**

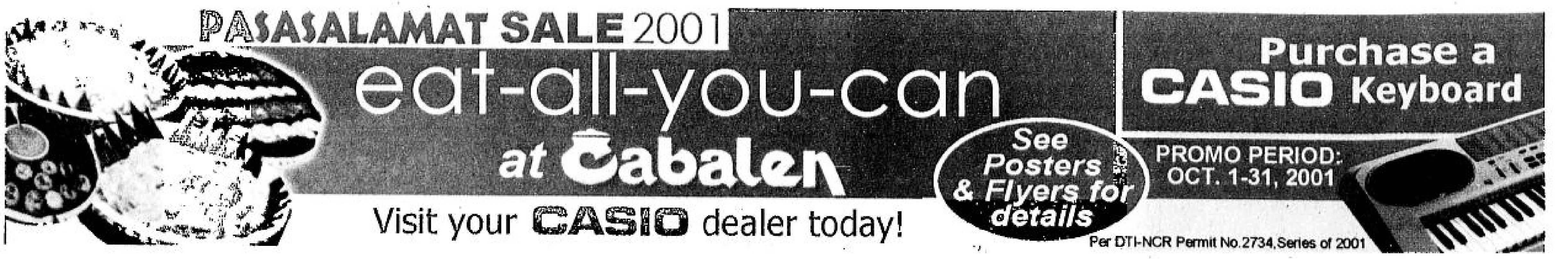
Press con postponement duly sent

THIS has reference to the article, which appeared Sept. 30 at the INQUIRER's weekly Waker-Uppers entitled "PopCom, press con pooper."

The press conference was for the 2001 State of World Population Report, originally scheduled to be launched last Sept. 26, 2001 at the Manila Diamond Hotel. Last Sept. 14, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) decided to postpone the launch indefinitely due to the tragic events that happened in the United States.

On Sept. 18, the Commission on Population sent notice of the postponement to all media entities, including the INQUIRER, with an attached list of media people we had previously invited. Given the limited time, we decided to course the notice of postponement through the invitees' respective offices so that they can be directly and more efficiently reached.

We wish to extend our sincerest apologies to the media people who showed up for the press con, however, may we stress that we did not fail to inform them, through their offices, of the postponement.—**TOMAS M. OSIAS, executive director, National Economic and Development Authority, Commission on Population, Welfareville Compound, Mandaluyong City**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Spotting flu's signs and symptoms

(From page A1)

Would you recognize the flu virus if you saw one? Probably not. There are at least three known types.

Type A causes deadly pandemics, or worldwide epidemics that strike every 30 or 40 years. Influenza B causes smaller and localized outbreaks, while Type C is stable and controllable.

As viruses, these babies mutate with new strains that appear regularly. This is the reason we almost always get the flu.

While our bodies have developed antibodies against the old flu virus, there is no defense for new strains, at least until after you catch the illness.

Who are at risk?

The flu virus spreads when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Handling things the infected person has touched is another way the flu is passed on.

So imagine crowded places, say schools and hospitals, and just one infected person. It won't take much to start a flu club would it?

If you have chronic disease of the lungs, kidneys, or heart, if you have diabetes and a weakened immune system, you are at high risk of getting the flu.

Children are at high risk if they have asthma or some other chronic lung condition. Children with heart disease have chronic lung congestion and so they may be more susceptible to infection.

Above all, children are at risk because they are children—they cough in other people's faces and don't wash their hands unless told to.

Treatment

People do not die of the flu but of the complications of the flu. These include bronchitis or pneumonia.

It is best to see the doctor. He may recommend bed rest, lots of fluids and the occasional fever medicine. He will be the first to remind you that the flu is viral and is therefore self-limiting, that is to say, it will go away.

Since it is a virus, antibiotics will not be of any help unless the doctor finds that a bacterial infection has also coincided or superimposed. You may ask if you can use the common antivirals such as amantadine and rimantadine. They help reduce the severity and duration of Influenza A.

Prevention

A doctor may suggest a flu vaccine to protect against known strains. However, self-care is still the way to go. This means sleeping well, exercising regularly, eating right and yes, washing your hands.

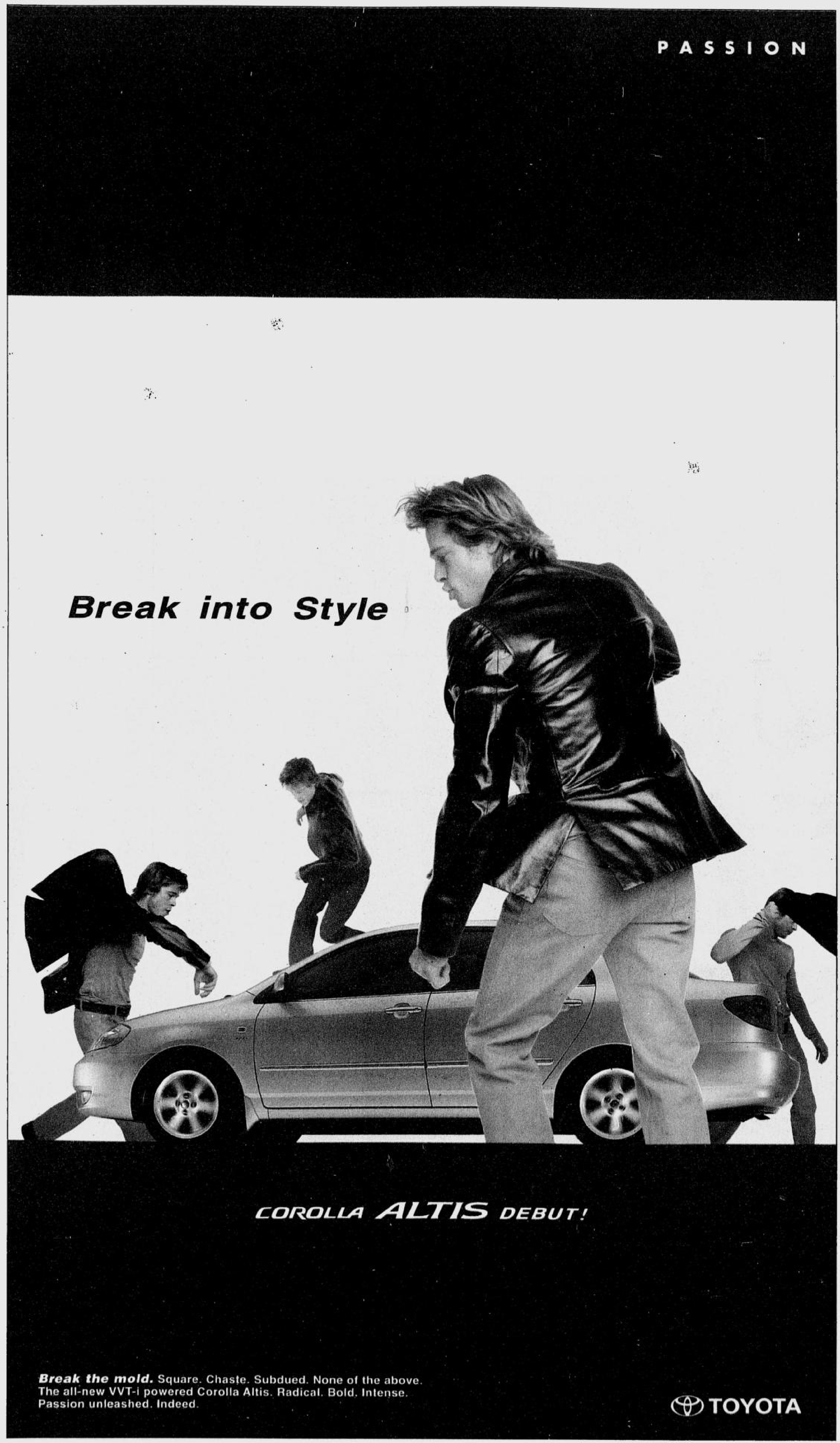
The flu season is upon us. We now know that it had nothing to do with the stars. It has everything to do with outsmarting a virus and getting back our precious lives.

The word "influenza" came from the medieval Latin word "*influentia,*" or influence. This definition grew from the false belief that epidemics were due to the influence of the stars.

Today, our understanding of the flu epidemic is somewhat better. That doesn't, of course, take away the fact that the flu can still kill people.

In the 1918 influenza pandemic, 20 million people died. In the United States, 20,000 people still die of the flu each year.

(Dr. Pujalte is an orthopedic surgeon at the Philippine Orthopedic Center. He has written several articles on various ailments.)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The WORLD

LUVERNE B. GUECO, EDITOR

Probe reaches 25 countries

WASHINGTON—Nearly 150 suspected terrorists and their supporters have been taken into custody in 25 different countries, as a US-led worldwide campaign against terror gathered steam, US President George W. Bush announced Monday.

"We're finding out members of the al-Qaida organization, who they are, where they think they can hide, and we're slowly but surely bringing them to justice," the president told employees of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Federal Bureau of Investigation officials confirmed the FBI had arrested or detained 480 individuals as part of its investigation of the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon outside Washington that have left about 5,700 people dead or missing.

Bush, for his part, announced the arrest abroad of Zayd Hassan Abd Al-Latif Masud Al-Safarini, the man believed to be behind a 1986 hijacking of a Pan Am flight in Pakistan, which left two Americans dead.

He pointed out, however, that Al-Safarini had no known ties to al-Qaida, the network led by Saudi-born Islamic militant Osama bin Laden, which is believed to be behind the Sept. 11 attacks.

But as US investigators pursued 238,000 leads received since the attacks, their attention increasingly shifted overseas, where the hijackers of US passenger planes used to ram the buildings are believed to have hatched their plot.

Law enforcement and intelligence officials looked into reports Monday that two days before the strikes, three of the suspected hijackers—Mohamed Atta, Marwan al-Shehhi and Waleed al-Shehri—each wired $5,000 to a Saudi man in the United Arab Emirates, who, upon receipt of the money, quickly left for Pakistan, according to law enforcement officials.

The transfers, made through Western Union outlets in Laurel, Maryland, apparently represented leftover money from preparations for the terrorist attacks and were addressed to Mustafa Ahmad, a long-time Bin Laden associate, the sources said.

Meanwhile, according to unconfirmed reports Monday, the US government probe may be closing in on Bin Laden, whom Bush has named as "the prime suspect" in the attacks.

According to NBC News, Bin Laden called his mother on the phone two days before the attacks, telling her, "In two days you're going to hear big news and you're not going to hear from me for a while."

While the Bin Laden family has formally disowned Osama bin Laden, his mother, Al-Kalifa bin Laden, is believed to have maintained ties with her son, the report said.

AFP

AN AFGHAN girl looks through a hole in her tent at a village set up for Afghan refugees on the outskirts of Islamabad Oct. 2. The UN has urged Pakistan to open its borders to hundreds of thousands of Afghans trying to flee hunger and a possible US attack on the ruling Taliban. REUTERS

Coalition may exact price from America

BY PETER MACKLER

WASHINGTON—As the United States builds an improbable posse of friend and foe to fight global terrorism, some analysts fear it could end up compromising some long-cherished principles for short-term support.

Washington claims the backing of more than 100 nations in its bid to exact justice for the Sept. 11 terror onslaught. It is an unlikely grouping indeed, including Nato, Russia, China and countries from the Gulf to Central Asia.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has called it less of a grand wartime alliance than "floating coalitions of countries which may change and evolve," contributing in different ways.

Many states have their own agendas, several have a price. And the Americans, their blood fired by the murderous attacks on Washington and New York, have not been shy about handing out carrots.

The United States muted its criticism of Russia's military actions in the breakaway republic of Chechnya, acknowledging Moscow's claim of rebel links to terror suspect Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaida network.

Sanctions waived

Washington waived sanctions imposed on India and Pakistan for their 1998 nuclear tests. It went along with a UN decision to lift diplomatic and travel restrictions on Sudan, still listed here as a state sponsor of terrorism.

Subtle and not-so-subtle approaches have been made to and from traditional archenemies like Cuba, Syria, Libya and North Korea. Human rights concerns appear to have been put on the back burner in many areas.

Such jockeying has prompted expressions of concern from some in the US foreign policy establishment who fear the Bush administration may be breaking too much other diplomatic furniture in its focus on terrorism.

Morton Halperin, a former director of the State Department's policy planning staff and a veteran Washington hand, said the government had come "very close to the edge" in some of its dealings.

"There's a danger that we will lapse into what we did during the Cold War, that is to support anybody who is anti-Communist and lay the seeds for future repressive regimes," he said.

"There is a danger and we have to be sensitive to it," Halperin added. "But we need the support of those people and we have to do what we have to do. I would hesitate to say whether we have crossed the line."

Rights issues

Mike Jendrzejczyk, Washington director for Human Rights Watch/Asia, said it was too early to tell whether the drive for support in the anti-terrorism war would lead to a scaling down of the US commitment on rights issues.

But he added: "The administration has got to be careful that in forming these alliances it does not lose sight of its long-term objectives."

Other foreign policy experts were less concerned about the long-range implications of President George W. Bush's campaign, arguing that the terrorist threat warranted decisive action.

Charles Fairbanks, director of the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute at Johns Hopkins University here, acknowledged some previous diplomatic goals might have fallen by the wayside in the push to forge an anti-terrorism front.

"But that's what wars always do," he said. "They lead to opportunistic alliances. War is inherently unpredictable and it changes the whole environment in ways you haven't anticipated."

"The threat (of terrorism) is great enough that I think it is worth it," Fairbanks said. "The concern of human rights will return when there is no longer the primary issue."

Henry Sokolski, executive director of the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center in Washington, was not bothered by the US decision to waive nuclear sanctions on Pakistan and India since the move was in the works anyway.

Sokolski said the issue was not whether Washington was sacrificing long-term aims for shorter-term objectives. The key question, he said, was whether it was sidling up to the right partners.

AFP

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Asia new battleground against AIDS, says UN

TOKYO—The UN's top AIDS official warned yesterday that Asia must wake up to the battle against the disease if it wants to avoid the fate of Africa.

"At the moment in Asia the perception is that it is particularly a problem for Africa but Asia is very vulnerable," said Peter Piot, the director of the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS.

"Actions taken today will determine the global shape of the epidemic in a decade," he said in a lecture at the United Nations University in Tokyo.

"We are not powerless to prevent the spread of HIV, epidemic is not inevitable," he said.

"The countries most affected are Thailand, Burma and Cambodia. Out of them, two have had quite impressive results, they have less infections than 10 years ago," Piot said.

Cambodia had witnessed "a modest decline in the number of infections" thanks to the adoption of measures following the "Thai model" based on strong campaigning and aggressive promotion of condom use.

According to Piot, the HIV-AIDS epidemic has reached alarming proportions in other countries in the region, including India.

"In India, we are close to five million infected people. On (a total population of) one billion, it could seem not so many but potential is there for a continuous spread," he warned.

"In Vietnam we have also a rise in infections and in China we saw some outbreaks. In South China it is linked to drug usage and in Henan province to trade in blood, even in rural communities," Piot said.

The UN official warned against complacency in the fight against HIV-AIDS.

"Even if in Asia, it has spread slower than in Africa, we are only at the beginning of an AIDS epidemic from an historic perspective," he said.

"There is a false sense of security in Asia. But there are also enormous opportunities; if measures are taken and prevention campaigns organized, greater disasters can be prevented."

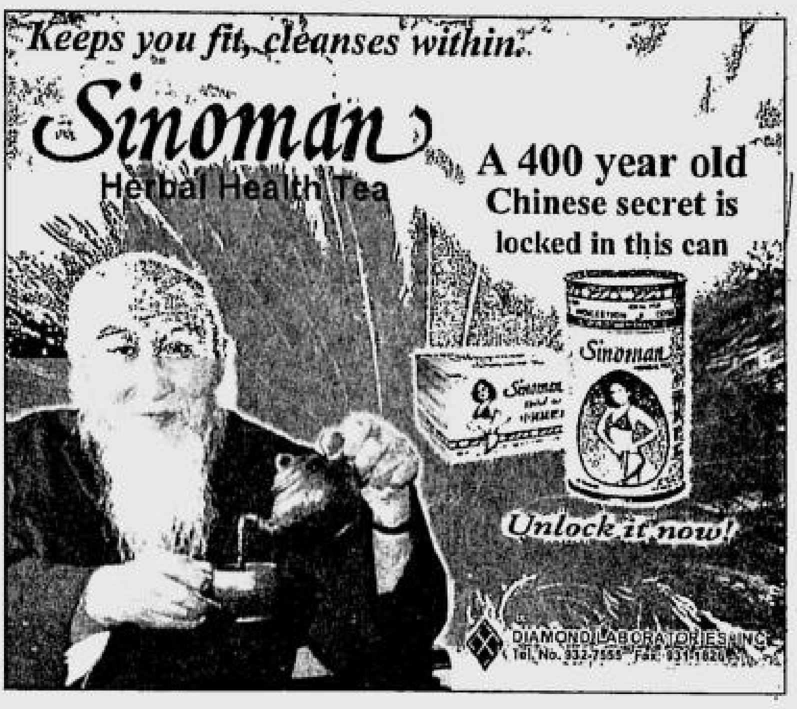
Besides the devastating human toll of HIV-AIDS, the disease can also have a dramatic impact on economic growth, he warned.

"By the beginning of the next decade, South Africa, which represents 40 percent of Africa's economic output, will be facing an output 17 percent lower than it would be without AIDS," he said.

Piot was in Japan for talks about the progress in setting up a Global Health Fund proposed in July last year during a Group of Eight summit of rich nations to help finance AIDS programS.

Pledges to the fund totaling $1.5 billion have already been made from countries including Nigeria, Uganda and South Africa. The funds are due to be put in place by the end of the year, Piot said.

He said "$1.5 billion for something that does not exist is a lot. The real test will be after two years whether there will be a replenishment." *AFP*



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BANGLADESH former prime minister Begum Khaleda Zia, with her granddaughter, flash the victory sign after casting her vote in a general election Oct. 1 in Dhaka. REUTERS

Zia poised for victory as rival says foul

DHAKA—Khaleda Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) yesterday appeared headed for a crushing election victory but her bitter rival and outgoing prime minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed cried foul.

Out of 183 seats already declared, the BNP-led alliance of Islamic and other parties bagged 134, a massive lead over the 34 won by Sheikh Hasina's Awami League, the official BSS news agency reported.

The news prompted an angry response from Sheikh Hasina, who had replaced Zia as prime minister in 1996 and became the first Bangladeshi leader to complete a full five-year term.

"The election was rigged . . . Our polling agents were tied up or driven out in many places," she said outside her Dhaka residence.

The allegation came despite the presence of close to 200 international observers deployed nationwide to ensure a fair vote after a violent campaign that claimed more than 140 lives.

The apparent ease of the BNP's victory would be a dramatic upset after a neck-and-neck campaign that analysts had said was too close to call.

Sheikh Hasina "is definitely unhappy because this is an unbelievable outcome", an Awami League source said.

There was no immediate comment from Zia to the early returns, which showed her BNP had won 126 seats in the 300-seat parliament, with a further eight seized by an allied Islamist party.

Both leaders contested from five constituencies, but only Zia won in all of them. Sheikh Hasina lost in at least one seat, television tallies said. *AFP*

Swissair ends 70-year history

ZURICH—Seventy years of aviation history ended Monday when Swissair said its flight operations would be swallowed up by its regional subsidiary Crossair, and sought bankruptcy protection for the rest of the airline.

"We are backing a radical fresh start for Switzerland's airline industry," said Marcel Ospel, chair of the Swiss bank UBS, which put together the recovery plan for the debt-crippled Swiss airline with its counterpart Credit Suisse.

The announcement marked the end of the once-flagship national carrier of Switzerland, saddled with billions of dollars in debt after a failed expansion plan, and hit hard by falling passenger numbers after last month's terrorist attacks in the United States.

The Swiss federal government said late Monday it would not participate in a stake in Basel-based Crossair.

"An intervention of the (Swiss) confederation is not necessary," Swiss Vice President Kaspar Villiger told reporters. "The creation of a new company is the best solution for the future under the given circumstances," he added. *AFP*

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- 1 per area
Consolation Prize: 4.2 kg. Single-Tub washer (model #ES-421W)
- 5 per area

2nd Minor Draw - December 1, 2001
Minor Prizes:
(to be received by winners in the following areas: GMA, Luzon, and Visayas/Mindanao):
First Prize: 29" Aphrody TV (model #29V-J200S)
- 1 per area
Second Prize: 1hp Window-type Room Aircon (model #AF-A901S)
- 1 per area
Third Prize: VCD Mini-System (model #CD-BK260V)
- 1 per area
Consolation Prize: 3.3 kg Twin-tub washing machine (model #ES-3300T)
- 5 per area

Grand Raffle Draw - January 12, 2002
Prizes to be won in each area (GMA, Luzon, and Visayas/Mindanao)
Grand Prize: Toyota REVO (SRC)
- 1 per area
Second Prize: Audio/Video Showcase
- 1 per area
Third Prize: Home Appliance Showcase
- 1 per area
Consolation Prize: Simba Portable CD Component (model #GX-CD1200W)
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See leaflets for complete promo details.

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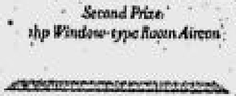

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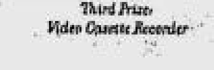

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Extreme Northern and Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms. SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Hi 25° Lo 16°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 21°
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 23°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 23°
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Roxas	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 25°
Cebu	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 31° Lo 23°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/10/03/01

ROUNDUP

Ex-rebels to meet GMA

CALAPAN CITY—Gov. Bartolome L. Marasigan will present 21 rebel-returnees to President Macapagal-Arroyo during her visit here today, according to Orlan A. Maliwanag, Oriental Mindoro information officer. Maliwanag said the provincial government would help the former rebels form a cooperative through which financial assistance can be channeled. He said Ms Macapagal was also expected to extend financial aid when she visits Gloria town, 71 km south of here. The town, named after the President, was created by an executive order in 1963 during the term of her father, the late President Diosdado Macapagal.

Joel J. Jabal, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Dengue on downtrend

SORSOGON CITY—Dengue fever cases in Sorsogon decreased in September with 12 recorded cases compared to 53 in August, provincial health office records here showed. From January to September, a total of 117 cases, including three deaths, have been reported. Maita Mortega, Dengue Prevention and Control Program coordinator, said the breeding sites of mosquitoes carrying the dengue virus might have already dried up. Six of the latest cases were reported in Sorsogon, three in Pilar, and one each in Prieto Diaz, Irosin and Juban.

Emir E. Gamis, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Cop kills cop

SAN JOSE DEL MONTE CITY—A policeman shot and killed a fellow policeman who allegedly tried to rape his former girlfriend in her house in Barangay Kaypian here on Sunday. Senior Insp. Anastacio Lopez, 27, of the police regional command in Camp Olivas in Pampanga died from several bullet wounds in the body. SP01 Placido Aquino, who surrendered to authorities, said he fired at Lopez when the latter drew his .45 cal. pistol. The woman said she sought police help when Lopez entered her house and tried to rape her.

Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Best in service delivery

MAGSINGAL, Ilocos Sur—This agricultural town has been proclaimed best implementor of the government's Comprehensive Integrated Delivery of Social Services (CIDSS) program this year, besting 79 towns in the Ilocos region. The Department of Social Welfare and Development regional office said Barangays Namalbalan, Maratudo and Macatcatud here—where the CIDSS program is being implemented—will receive P500,000 to help improve their economy.

Peter La. Julian, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

No 2 positions

MALILIPOT, Albay—A barangay official has given up his job in compliance with a decision of the Department of Interior and Local Government that he serve in only one government position at a time. Jaime Ceneta, barangay secretary of San Isidro here, resigned Sept. 30 following repeated demands by barangay council members and chose to teach full-time at the San Francisco Institute of Science and Technology here. Corazon Robar, DILG assistant provincial officer, said a barangay secretary receives not less than P1,000 monthly honorarium, depending on the internal revenue allotment of a barangay.

Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Diarrhea outbreak

MATI, Davao Oriental—A diarrhea outbreak was declared in Sitio Magapo, Barangay Sentral here after 30 people were rushed to the provincial hospital for drinking contaminated water. Dr. Crisuldo Malintad, provincial health officer said his office is still conducting a study whether bacteria-causing cholera or typhoid fever hit the victims, who are mostly children. Malintad said health workers have applied chlorine to sources of drinking water in the village but advised residents to boil the water before drinking it.

Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau

DOST scholarships

DAVAO CITY—The Department of Science and Technology yesterday announced that applications for its scholarship grant for 2002 were now being accepted. Students can avail themselves of the necessary papers for the Science and Technology program from DOST regional offices nationwide, science and technology centers in the provinces, and regional and division offices of the education department. Deadline for submission of applications is Nov. 23.

PDI Mindanao Bureau

Coop blamed for brownouts

MATI, Davao Oriental—The frequent power outages in the province, which have irked local traders, have spawned speculations that the Davao Oriental Electric Cooperative (Doreco) was behind the "bleeding" operations. But Gregory Dukil, Doreco general manager said the cooperative's financial standing was "sound" and that the power outages were mostly caused by failure of the system of the National Power Corp. Doreco has incurred a debt of P10.9 million from the Napocor and another P33 million from the National Electrification Administration, it was learned.

Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Quezon peace zone pushed

Multisectoral initiative gains support among provincial officials

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY—A multisectoral initiative for the declaration of Quezon as a "peace zone" is fast gaining support.

Rep. Rafael Nantes disclosed that the multisectoral peace covenant he started in General Nakar town was now being adopted in northern Quezon.

Nantes said that with the looming collapse of the peace talks between the government and communist rebels, armed conflict between the two sides could again escalate.

"If that happens, it is again the lives of the ordinary people that will be greatly affected," he said.

Gov. Wilfrido Enverga welcomed the idea of having the entire province declared a peace zone.

"It's good. But I think it depends on the ramification of the proposed peace zone," he added.

He said he was willing to serve as co-initiator for the proposed Quezon peace covenant.

Nantes said he would enjoin leaders in the province to start a campaign that would work for the declaration of the peace zone.

"Sectoral leaders can play a vital role here," said Nantes, a founding member of Tipan, a Church-based multisectoral organization under the auspices of the Prelature of Infanta.

Nantes clarified that the people themselves, through the holding of peace consultations and dialogues, would decide the parameters of their respective peace areas.

"We should not impose our will on the residents of the locality. They are in the best situation to assess what kind of agreement would hold in their area," he explained.

Only recently, the lawmaker acted on a widening rift between residents and government soldiers operating in General Nakar by holding the first multisectoral peace dialogue and consultation in the area.

Supt. Roberto Rosales, provincial police chief, said the tense situation in General Nakar has been defused with the signing of the peace covenant.

"No more incidents of alleged military abuses and forced disappearances of civilians have been reported. It's good if the peace initiative undertaken in General Nakar is replicated in other municipalities," Rosales said.

He said the police would fully support the proposed peace zones.

Board member Hernando Avellaneda said he would also extend full support and work for the peace initiative.

Officials of the Kapatiran at Alyansang Alay Para sa Kaunlaran ng Bayan or Kaakbay-Quezon, the province's largest coalition of nongovernment organizations, also expressed support for the declaration of Quezon as one entire province of peace.

"We will be fighting against all odds for its successful implementation. But for the sake of the people's peace and contentment, it is worth trying for all concerned," Jay Lim, Kaakbay-Quezon spokesperson, said.

Quezon has been the site of bloody encounters between communist rebels and government soldiers.

The Bondoc Peninsula in the province's third district and the Polillo-Real-Infanta-Nakar area in the first district are considered hotbeds of communist insurgency.

MAKING A BIG DIFFERENCE

People with disabilities displayed their various skills and talents during the 10th Philippine National Skills Competition held last week at the Victoria Plaza in Davao City. Among them were painter Erwin Dayrit (left) of Central Luzon, basket-weaver Priscilla del Rosario (middle) of Metro Manila and wood carver Arsenio Rapisora (right) of the Ilocos region.

PHOTOS BY RYAN LIM

P78 pay hike for E. Visayas sought

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—Leaders of a big labor federation are demanding a P78 across-the-board increase in minimum wages for workers in Eastern Visayas.

Vicente Casilan, secretary general of the Associated Labor Union-Trade Union of the Philippine (ALU-TUCP), said his group filed a petition for such increase before the Regional Tripartite Wage and Productivity Board (RTWPB).

He said the current wage levels were not enough to sustain the daily needs of workers in the region.

At present, non-agricultural workers in Leyte are receiving P177 daily minimum wage, while workers in other areas in the region get P173. Agricultural workers in Leyte receive a daily minimum wage of P158 and those in other parts of the region get P154.

Casilan said the proposed increase of P78 was "negotiable" for as long as the final minimum wage that will be agreed on will not place the workers at a disadvantage.

"It is up to the wage board to consider our proposal," he said. "But I'm praying that (the wage board) will consider our proposal."

Casilan said his group's petition was being supported by at least three independent labor groups based in Ormoc City.

Jaime Dechos, Leyte Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) executive director, chided the labor group for asking for an increase in wages.

He said any increases would be difficult to justify, especially since the country's economy has remained in the doldrums and the global market has been suffering from a recession following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the United States.

Dechos warned that if minimum wages were increased, businesses would be forced to lay off workers or shut down operations.

Casilan shrugged off Dechos' warnings. "They keep on saying that whenever we submit our proposal for a wage increase. They are not losing business but just their gains," he said.

Carlos Boteros, regional director of the Department of Labor and Employment, declined to comment on the wage petition.

"We will be having our preliminary meeting on this on Friday. You will know our stand on this petition by that time," he said.

2 more bar girls in Angeles City found with HIV

ANGELES CITY—Two more female commercial sex workers have been found positive for the human immuno-deficiency virus (HIV), which could develop into the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

Records from the city health office (CHO) showed that the two new HIV carriers were aged 24 and 27 and both working as bar girls in the city's entertainment district in Barangay Balibago.

Since 1984, 58 HIV or AIDS cases have been monitored in this city.

Mayor Carmelo Lazatin had earlier said his city was gaining an upperhand in its campaign against HIV and AIDS.

He said his administration has implemented a comprehensive anti-AIDS program that includes surveillance, testing, prevention and advocacy.

CHO records showed that the city has at least 1,300 registered commercial sex workers. But the IMA Foundation said this number increased to about 6,000 between September and February when foreigners visited the city.

The city government classifies workers in the entertainment industry as either registered or unregistered commercial sex workers.

The CHO's HIV and AIDS testing only covers registered commercial sex workers, who are required to get health permits before they can work.

About a third of the commercial sex workers here are not registered. They include minors who openly offer sex for a fee in Balibago.

The registered sex workers, on the other hand, are concentrated in the red light district along Fields Avenue, also in Balibago.

The avenue used to be known as the "sex playground" of American military personnel when they were still occupying the former Clark Air Base.

Fields Avenue is still popular among foreigners, mostly Australian, European and American tourists and immigrants.

Many registered commercial sex workers are also employed as dancers and guest relation officers in karaoke bars and nightclubs.

Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk

4 killed in clash between crime gang members, soldiers

By Butch D. Enerio
PDI Mindanao Bureau

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Four armed men were killed while several others were believed wounded in an encounter with government troops in Lanao del Sur early yesterday.

Maj. Jhonny Macanas, spokesperson of the 4th Infantry Division, said Army soldiers of the 58th Infantry Battalion clashed with about 20 armed men believed to be remnants of a criminal syndicate that authorities recently busted in Marawi City.

He said the armed men, led by a certain Maur Sidik, engaged the government forces in a running gun battle in Barangay Old Magampong in Kapai town. The clash lasted about 30 minutes, leaving four of the armed men dead.

The soldiers recovered five high-powered firearms, handheld radios, 2,000 rounds of M-16 bullets, a Browning Automatic rifle, M-14 rifles, 1,500 rounds of M-60 bullets and four rounds of recoilless rifle bullets.

Last week, police and military forces in Lanao del Sur raided members of criminal syndicate, led by a certain Tomimara Sidik, who were holed up in a three-story building in downtown Marawi.

After a 13-hour battle, 35 members of the syndicate were captured while six others, including Sidik, were killed.

The military said the group was engaged in drug trafficking, extortion and gunrunning, among other criminal activities.

Chinese-Filipinos want official Moon Festival

By Frank Cimatu
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—The moon, resplendent after weeks of being covered by rain clouds, became the focus in many Filipino-Chinese gatherings.

"To us, the moon has religious, spiritual, military, social, psychological, economic and artistic significance," said Dr. Charles Cheng, president of the Filipino-Cantonese Association in Baguio, during the Chinese Moon Festival here Sunday.

"The moon is everything to us," he said.

Now, the FCA-Baguio wants the moon to have spiritual significance as well.

Cheng said the Philippines should institutionalize the holding of a moon festival in the Philippines to attract tourists.

"The other Asian countries consider the moon festival as a holiday. The Philippines should also take advantage of this by coming out with activities not exclusive to the Chinese," he said.

The moon festival, also known as the mid-autumn festival, is celebrated on the 15th day of the eighth month of the lunar festival, which falls on Oct. 1 this year.

Cora Wong, the FCA festival coordinator, said that at this time, the moon is at its brightest.

Family members get together usually at their ancestral houses to celebrate unity and harmony, she said.

It is also at this time when the moon cake, a Chinese delicacy made of eggs, custard, red beans, lotus seeds and nuts, is eaten.

Wong said moon cakes were usually sold out on the eve of the festival.

During the festival, families also play a dice game where special *hopia* (a type of Chinese pastry) was given away.

For the past years, the moon festival in Baguio has been made open to non-Chinese.

Morr Pungayan, a linguist and guest speaker of the festival, shared 30 Ibaloi words that may have roots in Cantonese.

He said these words might have crept into the Ibaloi language from Chinese traders in the past centuries.

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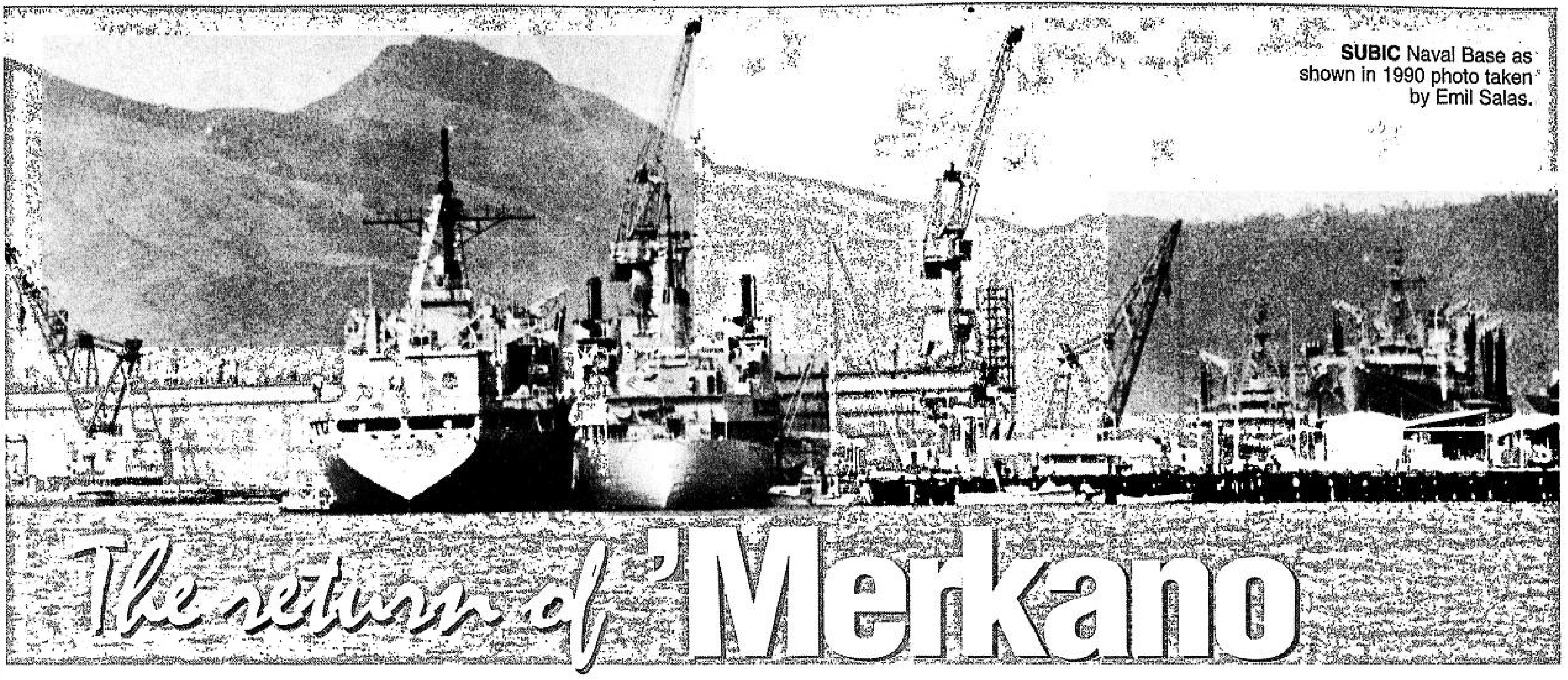

SUBIC Naval Base as shown in 1990 photo taken by Emil Salas.

The return of 'Merkano

BY TONETTE OREJAS
Olongapo City

THE MOMENT Admiral Thomas Fargo stepped into her office last week, Olongapo Mayor Katherine Gordon said she immediately raised to him her concerns about the decision of the United States to use nearby Subic for the global campaign against terrorism.

She recalled telling Fargo, the commander-in-chief of the world's largest and most powerful naval task force that oversees over half of the surface of the globe: "I have mixed emotions. I know the Philippine government has got to do something about terrorism but I'm also worried for my people."

As in the past but under a new circumstance, Subic, as well as Clark—in the words of the late Sen. Lorenzo Tañada—are again the "bases of our profound insecurity."

In Gordon's case, it is largely about the reversal of her people's efforts.

Olongapo residents and officials worked hard to help in the conversion of the nearby Subic Naval Base into the Subic Bay Freeport Zone. The naval base that bred a lot of social problems to the city became the rebuilding engine from the twin tragedies of the base's closure and Mt. Pinatubo's eruptions.

In particular, Gordon said, it became the starting point from which to erase the stigma of being labeled a "Sin City."

"For nine years," she said, "we moved heaven and earth to be where we are today."

Her uncertainties are valid, having known how it was to host the US military for almost a century.

"I don't know what kind of jobs are in the offing, but I'm very concerned about the peace and order and the social costs. We don't want to be relegated again as a rest and recreation spot. We will have to protect the people and their hard work," she said.

Gordon only echoed the many misgivings already expressed by various sectors about the coming conflict. Will Subic and Clark, the growth engines of Central and Northern Luzon and pledged by the Macapagal administration as support structures for the crackdown against terrorism, be still economically viable? What about the social costs of hosting the US military even for refueling and transshipment?

Not bases anymore

A lot of things are at stake, although militant groups questioned the government's brand of conversion, which is export-dependent.

On the line are private investments and the government's own efforts in reclaiming patrimony over the former bases, reports from the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority and the Clark Development Corp. showed.

In terms of private investments, some $5 billion has been poured into Subic and Clark since 1992. The facilities have housed the biggest corporations in electronics, information technology and cargo handling, like Federal Express and United Parcel Service.

Total export value has reached nearly $6 billion. Importations have drawn combined revenues amounting to less than P10 billion.

Subic and Clark have surpassed the peak employment level when these were bases. Dependent on the two zones are nearly 60,000 employees.

The airport, seaport, telecommunications, roads and housing facilities that the US Seventh Fleet and US 13th Air Force left in the former bases amounted to $12 billion.

Rehabilitating the Clark airport alone costs the government at least P1.3 billion.

Billions of pesos in foreign loans, mainly from Japan, have been borrowed to make the bases more viable. The most recent is the P17-billion Subic-Clark-Tarlac Toll Road. A $215-million (P10.8 billion) container port is in the works.

The Macagapal administration has also formed the Subic-Clark Alliance and to fund it, created a "private, non-debt, asset-backed securitized super fund" that expects to generate $3 billion (P150 billion) over five years for more projects.

Strategic location

Renato Diaz, presidential adviser for North Luzon, is optimistic that the US plan won't hurt the zones. "This only re-emphasized the strategic location of Subic and Clark in the global order of things," he said.

"Investor's haven" was how Rogelio Singson, chair of the Bases Conversion Development Authority, called the country's two largest special economic zones that are less than two hours by plane and about a week by ship from their Asian neighbors.

Citing the case of the Mactan Benito Ebuen Airport, which used to serve as an alternative to Subic, President Macapagal-Arroyo, in her visit to Clark on Friday, said she saw no conflict in the use of the former bases by the United States.

Elmer Cato, acting executive director of the Presidential Commission on the Visiting Forces Agreement, said the Philippine government has offered the facilities only for refueling, transit, re-supply and other activities in support of the International Counter-Terrorist Coalition.

"It did not offer the use of these as bases for US forces," he stressed.

But the President's example, according to investors, does not apply because unlike Mactan, the investments in the two bases are several times bigger.

Although the administration has committed Clark and Subic for the anti-terrorism campaign, no common plan or arrangements have been announced on how the gains and the viability of the two will be preserved.

SBMA chair Felicito Payumo and CDC president Emmanuel Angeles said each body was still hammering out the plan, mainly in the aspect of security.

Without a plan to that effect, business will find it hard to coexist with the military, according to Lito Mercado, vice president of the Clark Investors and Locators Association.

"Clark and Subic gave us local residents a new hope. We would rather that it be maintained as industrial enclaves," said Marcial Cañones, president of the CDC employees union.

Angeles City Mayor Carmelo Lazatin raises no question on the issue of sovereignty, business threats or safety of civilians.

"*Basta sinabi ni Presidente*, fully supportive *kami* (As long as it is the President's order, we will be fully supportive)," he said.

Military worth

Closed by the Philippine Senate in September 1991, Subic and Clark did not cease to be a significant concern in the US policy of rapid forward deployment, according to University of the Philippines Prof. Roland Simbulan.

The VFA, ratified by the Senate in 1999 despite strong public opposition, is integral to this policy, he said. It presaged the regular return to the country of American troops stationed in bases that the US still maintained all over the Asia-Pacific region.

The joint military exercises held in Subic, Clark and other Luzon areas acquainted the US troops with the Philippine terrain and conditions, he said.

Simbulan said it was not likely for the US to easily give up Subic and Clark.

Although these are not anymore military bases, their locations continue to make them strategic for the deployment of troops, like in the campaign against terrorism.

This fact was indisputable, Simbulan said, citing US congressional reports that he published in his book, "The Bases of Our Insecurity."

Although the bases were conceived to be in defense of Philippine security, Simbulan said American "aggression" since 1900 in China, Soviet Siberia, Indonesia, Korea, Vietnam, Iran and the Gulf War had been launched from Clark and Subic.

Through the bases, he said American ships and planes could spend a longer time operating in their mission areas than if they were traversing greater distances to their operating areas.

Travel time for ships from Subic to the American base at Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean is 10 to 14 days. Subic is, by far, the most important installation because it is an air base, a naval base, a communications base and an intelligence base with a "Classic Wizard" ocean surveillance system, seabed sonars and a huge logistics depot that can supply up to 10 ships and 10,000 Marines.

Compared to Subic, Cebu is nearer to an American base in Guam, while Clark is closer to the Kadena Air Force and Yokosuka Naval Bases in Japan.

For the Gulf War in 1990 and 1991, an entire armada had docked at Subic for re-supply before it headed for the Middle East.

Simbulan said Fargo's recent visit only reiterated the importance of Subic to the Pacific Fleet. The refueling in Clark and Mactan by US aircraft, which Philippine officials said has been "routinely done," also emphasized the role of the former bases for transit even under "peacetime conditions."

Except for a radar network in Clark, the facilities that the US military left in the bases are intact and, in fact, have been rehabilitated. New roads had been built while the airport had been renovated at the former Wallace Air Station in La Union, now the Poro Point Special Economic and Freeport Zone.

But, as Gordon feared, there is disquiet owing to a collective past that is sordid.

Via the bases that were occupied by Japanese forces, local communities suffered the horrors of World War II. To date, hundreds of women turned into sexual slaves have not yet seen justice.

The bases did not just occupy vast tracts of ancestral domains. Bombings launched from there killed many Aetas or dragged them into the war as foot soldiers, according to Pablo Santos, commissioner of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples.

In the succeeding decades when more troops came, prostitution, smuggling and vices abound, preventing the economies of Angeles and Olongapo from industrializing.

"We cannot and should not allow our territory to be used as a staging area for intensified US attacks and intervention against other countries, in the guise of seeking justice for the New York and Washington bombings. Our people and nation's safety is at greater risk," Simbulan warned.

From pines to 'wagwagan' to flower city

BY JULIE KHRISTIE ARAGON, ALLAN MACATUNO AND ARTHA KIRA PAREDES
Baguio City

FOR THE LAST 10 years, Baguio City has been alternately tagged as the City of Pines and as the summer capital of the country. Among its other names are the strawberry city and the *wagwagan* center of the North.

Now, the city government and the Department of Agriculture are considering Baguio a "City of Flowers."

According to Elizabeth Verzola, DA executive director in the Cordillera, her department has already released about P2 million as initial fund for the project.

Under the project, the city government will formulate the master plan, identify and make available the sites for the nurseries, greenhouses and flower and ornamental gardens, and provide manpower by tapping and harnessing all sectors.

Last month, the DA-CAR and the city government signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) on how both parties will work together.

"In order to further enhance the beauty of Baguio City, for which it has long been known worldwide, there is an imperative need to develop it as a 'City of Flowers' with the able assistance of the Department of Agriculture," the MOA read.

Cutflower industry

On the other hand, the DA will establish nurseries and greenhouses for the propagation of flower species adaptable to the city and provide training and other technical services.

The project is part of the DA-CAR's proposal to implement urban agriculture in the city.

Known as the cleanest and greenest highly urbanized city in the country, Baguio, along with its suburbs, has always been identified with flowers.

The popularity of cutflowers began only in the late 1980s. Back in the 1960s and 1970s, the flowers were grown only by hobbyists or as backyard ventures for weekend gardeners.

Bahong, the rose plantation in Benguet, used to be a sight of golden rice fields during that time. However, foreigners introduced gardening to the local people.

Since water supply for rice planting was not enough, the people shifted from rice planting to vegetable gardening. But in the late 1980s, entrepreneurs began to think of cutflowers as a serious business and decided to develop these as an industry. Rose was the first cutflower introduced.

Since then, rose production has become one of the major industries in Benguet.

2 components

The project, which will serve as an opportunity to promote the city as a tourist destination, has two components.

First is the construction of a nursery greenhouse with complete facilities for rearing and propagating seedlings. Second is the establishment of a trading center.

"We cannot afford to always plant because it is very expensive. So the strategy is to come up with a 1,000-square-meter nursery greenhouse for the rearing and propagation of flowering and ornamental plants," Patricio Ananayo, the DA's marketing assistance division chief, said.

THIS FLOAT bedecked with anthuriums, chrysanthemums and everlasting flowers depicting an Igorot maiden was among the many attractions during this year's Panagbenga or the Baguio Flower Festival.
FILE PHOTO: TOOTS SOBERANO

The greenhouse will be the source of planting materials for the beautification of the major parks in the city, especially Burnham.

"Flowers are a beautiful commodity," Robert Domoguen, DA-CAR executive secretary, said, adding that a specific place should be identified where these flowers can be sold.

In the city's public market, a small area serves as the flower section. Markets in some Benguet towns also sell flowers.

Domoguen said the DA-CAR planned to establish trading centers that will also serve as marketing arms of the cutflower industry.

The trading centers will be managed by the growers and farmers themselves, he said.

"This project will be aimed at boosting tourism and increasing income and generating livelihood for farmers," he said.

'The shoes we wear'

MANY things may appear improbable but they are not basically impossible." This was the overall theme of Cadet Third Class Marx Luther Rosario's winning essay "The Shoes We Wear" in the recent national essay writing contest sponsored by the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation.

HOMETOWN Snapshots

Rosario received a cash prize of P100,000 and two Compaq personal computers.

His winning article captivates the essence of the "greatness of spirit shown in service to the people," as exemplified by Fr. **Augustine Nguyen Lac Hoa.**

Hoa won the 1964 Ramon Magsaysay Award for Public Service for "his extraordinary valor in defense of freedom" as a guerrilla priest, former soldier and adviser-chaplain in China, Cambodia and Vietnam from the early 1950s to the mid-1960s.

Rosario grew up in Labrador, Pangasinan, and was a campus writer in high school. His family migrated to Mindanao and he went to college at the Ateneo de Cagayan and Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro City where he contributed to "The Crusader," the campus magazine. He stopped during his third year and entered the Philippine Military Academy.

"Writing does not just end in merely writing. You must put it into action. If not, you're just fooling yourself," he said. "I've realized that there are a lot of things that we can do not just for ourselves."

"The Shoes We Wear," Rosario said, talks about the PMA cadets and their different kinds of footwear. He said his essay showed how in every duty, with every specific uniform, there is a prescribed footwear.

"Our footwear means our flexibility. Every specific person wears different kinds of shoes. Each of us has his own duty," he said. ***Jhulie Kristie Aragon, Sandra Go and Michelle Angeli Mendoza***

Seedlings on bike

THIS 76-year-old man created a job for himself. It could be an example of the promised one million jobs to be created by the Macapagal administration.

Almost daily, **Javier Dantes,** of San Jose City, loads his bicycle with 10 to 15 fruit tree seedlings and at 5:30 a.m., he rides on to the highway going to a market in Nueva Ecija or Pangasinan. Along the way, a prospective customer flags him down to buy one or two seedlings.

At 1 p.m., he rides back home to prepare himself for work the next day.

Dantes' job takes him biking as far as 35 kilometers.

"My earnings for selling seedlings are more than enough for me. I give some to my grandchildren," Dantes said in Filipino.

"I want to help in having many trees. I don't like to depend on others for my livelihood. And I want to maintain a healthy body that's not wasted by vices."

He sells assorted fruit tree seedlings that he buys from plant propagators. Sometimes, he grows the seedlings himself. Some of them, he said, are grafted seedlings. He earns P200 to P300 a day.

Dantes started selling tree seedlings in 1996, a year after his wife died. He estimated that he had sold more than 4,000 tree seedlings.

He said he believes that there are many ways people can earn a living in the countryside. He said what he does is only an example. What is needed, he said, is the will and the determination to do it. ***Anselmo Roque***

'Narcopolitics' scandals clouding PMA's name

(From page A1)

PMA spokesperson Capt. Edgard Arevalo said Sen. Joker Arroyo's conclusion fulfilled what PMA alumni had most feared since the Senate probe began: that the academy "would soon bear the brunt of the fallout from the 'narcopolitics' scandals."

But Arevalo admitted that the controversy had sparked a period of soul-searching for the academy.

The entire institution "underwent serious self-introspection about the soldiers it has been producing" after the Senate inquiry into military intelligence allegations against Sen. Panfilo Lacson, said Arevalo, a member of PMA Class 1990.

"We realized (as soon as the hearings started) that we should be more discerning to avoid the 'garbage in, garbage out' scenario. We are now thorough about our background checks on every PMA applicant," he said in a phone interview in Baguio City.

At yesterday's hearing—the seventh in the inquiry—another PMA graduate, Supt. Francisco Villaroman, said the drug scandal was an offshoot of a fight among PMA alumni.

"There is a war among PMA graduates. We PMA graduates are creating all the problems here in the Philippines," he said in Filipino.

"We will take the consequence of our actions and be jailed if proven guilty," he added.

Arevalo took exception to such comments.

"The PMA alumni is currently split on the issue (of who is telling the truth in the controversy), but we all share the sentiment that PMA should not be blamed for producing these men," he told the INQUIRER.

"As soon as the PMA graduates them, our alumni (go through) different stages in life, are subjected to different environments, and the PMA cannot be held accountable for their career decisions," Arevalo said.

Alumni

Arroyo questioned the PMA's indirect role in "narcopolitics" as he grilled Senior Supt. John Campos, Ong's former police handler and a member of PMA Class 1987.

Arroyo noted that former undercover agent Mary "Rosebud" Ong's testimony implicated Lacson and former Narcotics Command chief, Chief Supt. Reynaldo Acop, both members of PMA Class 1971, and Campos of PMA Class 1987.

Both Acop and Campos disputed Ong by implicating, in turn, former police Deputy Director General Roberto Lastimoso of PMA Class 1967 and Senior Supt. Reynaldo Berroya, Lacson's public nemesis and a member of PMA Class 1969.

Arroyo pointed out that the chief aggressor in the hearings is another PMAer, Col. Victor Corpus, chief of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp).

Corpus later said the supposed war among PMAers does the country good.

"It means that there are some of us who are telling on each other, hard as it may seem. It does not mean that we PMAers should turn a blind eye on alleged irregularities of our fellow officers," he said.

Reforms

According to Arevalo, PMA Supt. Rufo de Veyra has already instituted active reforms to address the issue. These reform measures were highlighted on Monday at Fort del Pilar by a "covenant for cadet empowerment."

PMA cadets themselves drafted the covenant in reaction to the public scandals implicating their seniors in the alumni, the spokesman said.

"These cadets read the newspaper, after all, and they have formed their own sentiments or conclusions (about Lacson's role in narcopolitics)," Arevalo said.

"The Lacson investigation notwithstanding, PMA needed some introspection because times have been changing fast and the institution needs to match the changes," he added.

During a recent survey regarding the honor code, many cadets seemed to be confused about issues relating to the abuse of power and position, with the lines between propriety and impropriety "blurred," Arevalo revealed.

No presumptions

Arevalo said PMA alumni wanted to distance themselves from the Senate hearings because the accusations "have dragged on for months without providing a single piece of conclusive evidence against either Lacson, Corpus, Campos or Berroya."

"For younger alumni members like myself, we have been a little more objective about the (Lacson) case because we never really encountered Lacson, except for a few of my classmates who fell under his command. So many of us still have no presumptions about his character," he said.

"But people who met Lacson, who interacted with him, have already judged him, and that is what affects the PMA alumni today," he added.

Lacson's former PMA bunkmate, Chief Supt. Virtus Gil, is a case in point. Gil publicly blamed Lacson for his sudden ouster as chief of the Western Police District Command (WPDC) last year, after Ong testified last month that his ouster was sponsored by Lacson campaign donor Kim Wong.

Gil is now director of the Cordillera police.

'Shielding' Ping

At yesterday's hearing, Arroyo, chair of the Senate blue ribbon panel, accused Campos and Acop of "shielding" Lacson and the former Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF) from Ong's charges.

Campos, who was the first to testify during the five-hour hearing, got Arroyo's goat when he repeatedly denied knowledge of whether Lacson or the PAOCTF were involved in anti-drug operations that were allegedly fronts for crime.

"The entire testimony here has been an attempt to shield the PAOCTF as not involved in these things—in operations in narcotics, in kidnapping," Arroyo said.

Arroyo said a video clipping showed that it was the PAOCTF that investigated the illegal drug operations of suspected Chinese drug lords who were later killed.

While grilling Campos, Arroyo recalled that Acop, while testifying last week, had attempted to clear the PAOCTF of any wrongdoing.

"The testimony here of Acop was testimony that shielded PAOCTF from the beginning to the end. So I'm asking you now, what is the role of PAOCTF?" Arroyo asked Campos.

"Sir, I'm incompetent to answer that question, I was not a member of PAOCTF," said Campos, a former liaison officer for the NarcGroup.

Arroyo scolded him: "You should know just when the PAOCTF comes in. How can you now be incompetent when . . . you were in narcotics . . . If you're incompetent to talk about the PAOCTF, then what are you competent to talk about?"

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Text joke gets Pinoy in trouble

(From page A1)

at (sic) me. And I really need a friend. Yours truly, Osama bin Laden."

A Filipino immigrant in Belgium received this text message in his cell phone. He wasn't laughing. It got him in trouble with the Belgian police. He was detained for 12 hours, long after his fellow Filipino immigrants who had also been invited for questioning were released.

The text is typical of the Pinoy humor that circulated in the Philippines after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the United States.

Fr. Apolo de Guzman, a chaplain for the Filipino community in Brussels, said he and other Filipino community leaders had to step in.

"A lot of us received the text from friends in the Philippines. We explained to the police it was a joke. Eventually they (police) believed us," he told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

De Guzman brought up the incident as he denied the claim of Manila-based Migrante International that several Filipinos, including children, were rounded up in the early hours of Sept. 20 and detained by the Belgian police for 8 to12 hours.

Migrante charged that it was "open season for Filipinos and people of color" after the United States declared war against Muslim terrorists.

Migrante wrong

"I told them to stop because they're wrong. I told Migrante there was no maltreatment. Then I was misquoted," De Guzman complained.

He said the police invited six families—14 adults and 14 children—for questioning around 6 a.m.

Migrante president Leo Legaspi last week quoted De Guzman as saying that Filipinos in Brussels are "living in fear" after the police questioning.

The priest denied making such statement.

"I did not say that. I told them their relatives in Manila are afraid that (the Filipinos here) might be deported because of the unfounded accusations against the Belgian authorities."

He said many Filipinos in Belgium are no longer worried they will be deported because they have availed of the government's alien regularization program.

Except for two who failed to produce their papers all the rest were released by noon.

The police were apparently satisfied that they did not know anyone in their list of 30 Middle East nationals who are suspected terrorists.

"When the police heard they were Catholics, that they go to Mass, they were satisfied. They were even joking with (the Filipinos)," De Guzman said.

He said the police took the children to school because the parents were already late for work.

He said it was impossible for the police to maltreat the children because the government has strict laws against child abuse.

But one Filipino was detained until 6 p.m. because of Osama's supposed text message.

De Guzman said the police thought he was being paid by Osama so they asked him where he got his money and checked his address book.

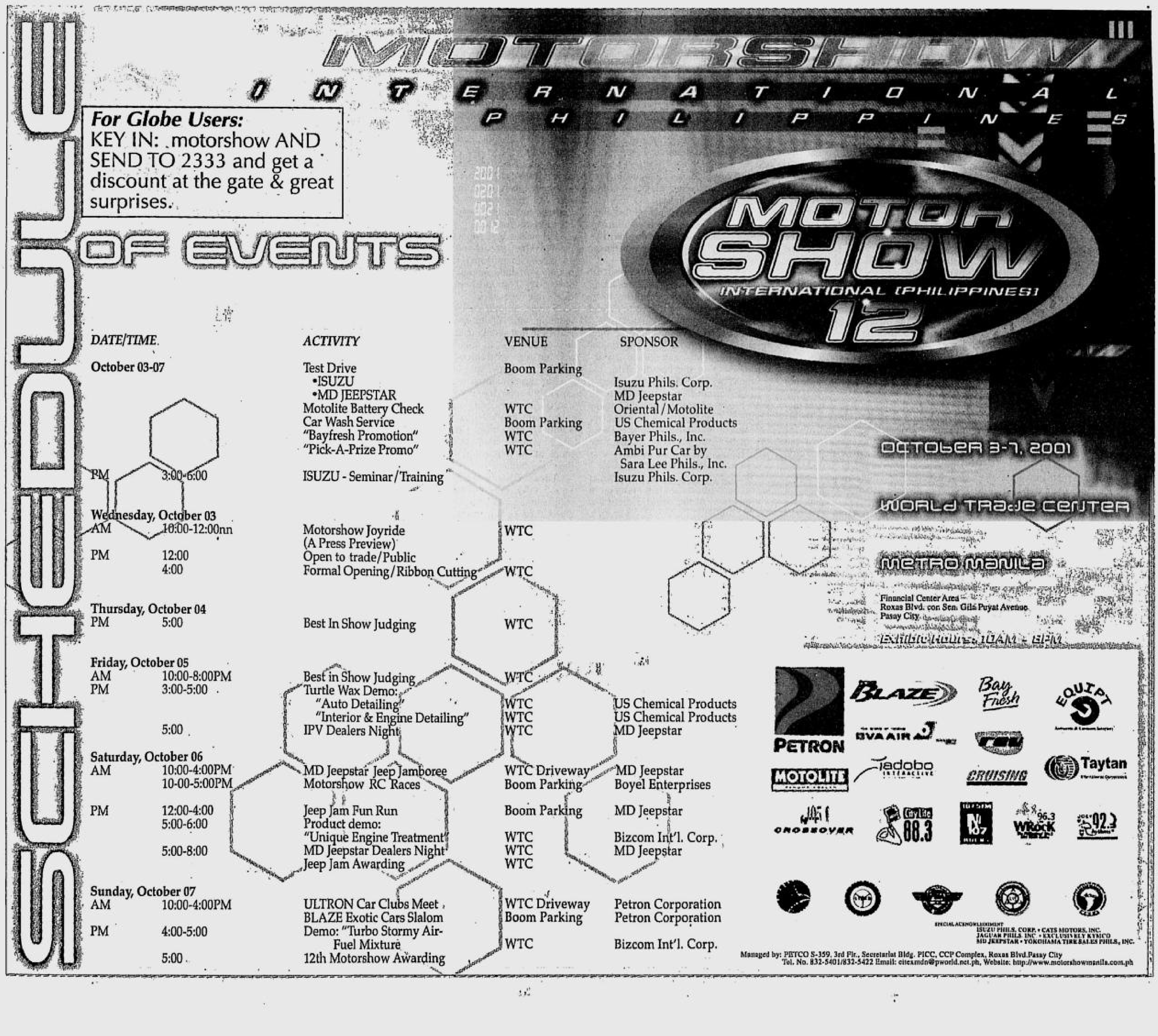
De Guzman said the Philippine Embassy in Brussels and NGOs investigated the incident and concluded there was no reason to file a protest, as Migrante and some Filipino lawmakers have urged.

But Migrante International yesterday continued to challenge the Department of Foreign Affairs to investigate the maltreatment of 30 Filipinos who were rounded up in Belgium.

"The DFA and Philippine Embassy in Brussels should go out and investigate the incidents instead of merely accepting the reports that arrive at their doorstep," said Leo Legaspi, Migrante chair.

Legaspi was reacting to a statement by Vice President and Foreign Affairs Secretary Teofisto Guingona challenging the affected Filipinos to "come forward" if they felt they were maltreated by the Belgian police.

Legaspi said the DFA should do more than waiting for the victims to come forward, but instead send out investigators to take the testimonies of all those rounded up and detained.



MOTORSHOW INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINES

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

DATE/TIME		ACTIVITY	VENUE	SPONSOR
October 03-07		Test Drive	Boom Parking	
		•ISUZU		Isuzu Phils. Corp.
		•MD JEEPSTAR		MD Jeepstar
		Motolite Battery Check	WTC	Oriental/Motolite
		Car Wash Service	Boom Parking	US Chemical Products
		"Bayfresh Promotion"	WTC	Bayer Phils., Inc.
		"Pick-A-Prize Promo"	WTC	Ambi Pur Car by Sara Lee Phils., Inc.
PM	3:00-6:00	ISUZU - Seminar/Training		Isuzu Phils. Corp.
Wednesday, October 03				
AM	10:00-12:00nn	Motorshow Joyride (A Press Preview)	WTC	
PM	12:00	Open to trade/Public		
	4:00	Formal Opening/Ribbon Cutting	WTC	
Thursday, October 04				
PM	5:00	Best In Show Judging	WTC	
Friday, October 05				
AM	10:00-8:00PM	Best in Show Judging	WTC	
PM	3:00-5:00	Turtle Wax Demo:		
		"Auto Detailing"	WTC	US Chemical Products
		"Interior & Engine Detailing"	WTC	US Chemical Products
	5:00	IPV Dealers Night	WTC	MD Jeepstar
Saturday, October 06				
AM	10:00-4:00PM	MD Jeepstar Jeep Jamboree	WTC Driveway	MD Jeepstar
	10-00-5:00PM	Motorshow RC Races	Boom Parking	Boyel Enterprises
PM	12:00-4:00	Jeep Jam Fun Run	Boom Parking	MD Jeepstar
	5:00-6:00	Product demo: "Unique Engine Treatment"	WTC	Bizcom Int'l. Corp.
	5:00-8:00	MD Jeepstar Dealers Night	WTC	MD Jeepstar
		Jeep Jam Awarding	WTC	
Sunday, October 07				
AM	10:00-4:00PM	ULTRON Car Clubs Meet	WTC Driveway	Petron Corporation
		BLAZE Exotic Cars Slalom	Boom Parking	Petron Corporation
PM	4:00-5:00	Demo: "Turbo Stormy Air-Fuel Mixture	WTC	Bizcom Int'l. Corp.
	5:00	12th Motorshow Awarding		

MOTOR SHOW INTERNATIONAL [PHILIPPINES] 12

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It's not bioterrorism

(From page A1)

said, came in succession and after several hours, the number of victims had grown.

The Department of Health is not even declaring any flu epidemic.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit explained that the number of cases in the schools was within the normal range. *(See related story.)*

Education Secretary Raul Roco said he would not order a cleanup of the public schools as a cleanup could trigger alarm and worsen the mass hysteria gripping parents and teachers.

"Why would you scare people? Nobody has died," Roco said at a press briefing. "You have to keep society rational because if you alarm people, you are only helping terrorism."

But parents would have none of it.

Like most mothers, Chicky Locsin knows that catching the flu is as normal for children as wanting to play.

But when she learned from news reports that an unknown "airborne" virus had struck exclusive schools in eastern Metro Manila, she wasted no time and went to the Poveda Learning Center to fetch her daughter.

Some 100 students from Poveda had reportedly been brought to the school clinic after experiencing flu-like symptoms.

"My daughter has not been feeling well since last week. But the classes are so hard and she cannot afford to be absent," an obviously worried Locsin told reporters, amid the hysteria at the entrance of Poveda.

She was only one of the many parents, nannies and media people who flocked to the school to fetch their children and confirm reports that hundreds of students had been hospitalized due to a still unknown "virus."

Locsin said her daughter had cough and fever and a recurring throat infection.

"She told me that there were a number of people in school, some of them her classmates, who were also sick. But I never thought of it as unusual because of the bad weather during the past few days," she said.

But Locsin said she got even more upset when she arrived at the school and found out that she could not just take her daughter home.

Chaos

The school administration had started implementing stricter security measures due to chaos caused by all the people wanting to get inside the school grounds. Only parents and nannies who had a pass were allowed to go in.

"I was told that I first had to write a letter of request before I would be allowed to pull out my child," she said with apparent infuriation.

"I mean, it was a room full of worried parents and these people wanted us to go through all that bureaucracy!" she added.

Like Locsin, Badette Barbers, wife of Surigao del Norte Rep. Robert Ace Barbers, scurried to get their eldest son King, a first grader, out of the La Salle Greenhills compound.

Barbers said school officials informed the parents that they had yet to determine the type of the virus.

"At first, (school officials) didn't want to release the kids. I was so angry," Barbers said.

She said LSGH officials informed parents that the virus downed at least 219 students as of yesterday.

"In my son's class alone, 17 were infected," Barbers said.

Classes suspended

At St. Paul College, where more than 500 students have been infected, the atmosphere was calm as classes had been suspended as of Monday afternoon. One parent said that it was the first time in the school's history that something like this happened. Few parents could be seen haggling with guards for permission to get in.

The school management had issued strict order not to allow anyone in so that even policemen and representatives of the Department of Education had a hard time before they could get in to conduct an investigation.

The whole campus is being fumigated to arrest the spread of the virus.

At LSGH and Xavier, officials announced yesterday that there would be no classes today.

Barbers said that reports of schoolchildren suffering from flu-like symptoms could be the start of a terrorist attack, through biochemical contamination, targeted at top government officials but using their children as victims.

"I told my husband about it and told him it was nothing to joke about," she said.

Rich kids' disease

It was peculiar how the virus hit only the exclusive schools where only the sons and daughters of the rich are enrolled.

While school officials have yet to determine the cause of the outbreak, it was noted that all these schools had air-conditioned classrooms.

"Probably that was a contributing factor," said Dr. Jennifer Ramirez of LSGH, referring to the air-conditioning system.

Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez said a team of experts from the Environmental Management Bureau and the DENR National Capital Region will help the Department of Health in checking the incident.

What's an epidemic?

By Stella O. Gonzales

WHAT is an epidemic and when does the Department of Health declare one?

According to DOH epidemiologist Dr. Eric Tayag, the department declares an epidemic when there is an unusual occurrence of a particular health event that is more than the expected number for a particular geographical area, or a particular group of persons, or a particular period.

For example, the public might think that there is already a dengue epidemic this year because thousands of Filipinos have been afflicted with the disease. But for the DOH to declare a dengue epidemic, there must be an increase in the number of expected cases. This can be done by comparing this year's figures with that of the previous years' figures.

The DOH, by the way, does not differentiate between an "epidemic" and an "outbreak."

"They are one and the same," Tayag said.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit said the data so far gathered by DOH disease experts from the flu-hit schools in Metro Manila "does not support" what the DOH would consider an epidemic.

He said that the flu cases in the schools "can be explained within the normal course of diseases" that are expected to occur.

Dayrit, who has an expertise in epidemiology, said that one should consider the apparently large number of flu cases within the entire population of a school. If this were done, then the figures would show that the students suffering from influenza would comprise only a small percentage of the entire school population.

Just a mild strain of flu, says DOH

(From page A1)

"There is no information that confirms the possibility of a bioterrorist attack," he said.

Dayrit said that despite the relatively large number of reported consultations in the school clinics, the patients represented only a small percentage of the schools' respective populations.

Dayrit noted that from 0.05 percent to 5 percent of the total number of schoolchildren in the schools were affected.

The schools are St. Paul College-Pasig with 500 cases; La Salle Greenhills, 277 out of its 5,427 pupils; Xavier School, 50 out of 4,000; St. Jude Catholic School, 45 out of 2,434; Poveda Learning School, 18 out of 2,000; and Pasig Catholic School, four out of its 6,850 pupils.

Asked why the virus seemed to have affected only children in private schools, Dayrit said there could be cases in public schools if anyone bothered to check.

"Keep calm. It is the influenza season and it is a normal occurrence during this time," Dayrit said.

Influenza season comes with the rainy Season. "It started a few months ago and we still have the rainy season until now," the health secretary said.

National Security Adviser Roilo Golez earlier blamed the news of an outbreak in private schools on text messages quoting reports from the ABS-CBN News Channel.

"What we may have been seeing are cases of influenza due to the influenza season. These have just been blown out of proportion because of the fast communication technology," Dayrit said.

"Text messaging has blown it out of proportion," he added.

DOH teams

Dayrit said DOH teams were sent yesterday morning to the private schools in Mandaluyong, San Juan and Pasig after the health department received alarming reports of the viral infection in the schools.

"We wanted to find out what the disease was, if there were any increased hospital admissions as a result of the disease and how it affected the children," Dayrit said.

The DOH teams found no alarming increase in the number of influenza cases and no one among the schoolchildren were hospitalized.

"If the disease were serious they would have been sent to the nearby hospitals. Instead, the children were sent home," Dayrit said.

He said only La Salle Greenhills suspended classes as a result of the high number of consultations at its clinic.

He denied earlier reports that other schools suspended classes because of the disease.

"St. Paul College in Pasig suspended classes not because of the disease but because it had scheduled fumigation. Poveda did not suspend classes at all," he said.

Dayrit said his department would conduct further studies on the conditions of the children to verify if the influenza virus was the only factor that caused the schoolchildren to fall ill.

Flu downs hundreds . . .

(From page A1)

Luisa Domingo, a staff member at St. Paul, where some 2,000 students are enrolled, said "an airborne virus" caused the illnesses.

The school said it had suspended all classes starting Tuesday until Friday "as an emergency measure . . . to give way for the fumigation of all classrooms and offices."

A number of students of the Poveda Learning School in Mandaluyong City; La Salle Greenhills, Xavier School and Immaculate Concepcion Academy—all in San Juan; the Ateneo de Manila's elementary and high schools in Quezon City and Colegio de San Agustin in Makati were also reported to have fallen ill.

For an unknown reason, the virus has hit only the exclusive schools in the metropolis.

The Department of Education-National Capital Region reported that the public schools were safe from the virus.

Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos said he would order all private and public schools in the city to conduct a sanitation check and cleanup to preempt the spread of any virus.

Abalos, who rushed to the La sale Greenhills where his son is studying, sent not only local government health officials to the school. He also sent police personnel to the school to check the commotion on the campus.

Since Monday, at least 158 elementary and high school students at La Salle Greenhills were treated for fever at the school clinic. A total of 587 students and six teachers complained of dizziness.

The Xavier School reported that 79 of its pupils were down with fever.

The Colegio de San Agustin registered 799 students sick with fever from Sept. 1 to Oct. 2, according to a recent report by the Office of Civil Defense.

At the Ateneo, 15 high school students, many of them freshmen, and 30 grade school students were sent home yesterday due to high fever and other flu-like symptoms, said Zeny Badillo, the Ateneo high school infirmary nurse.

Parents

Parents called up the Ateneo yesterday morning to check on their children after news spread that students from La Salle Greenhills, Poveda Learning Center, and Xavier High School did not go to school or were sent home because a number of students exhibited flu-like symptoms.

The news raised concerns that terrorists had used their biological and chemical weapons against the population.

Ateneo school officials said that, as of press time, they were still counting the number of students who called in sick and did not attend their classes yesterday.

Badillo explained that since last week, there was a noticeable increase of students complaining of flu-like symptoms.

On Sept. 24, the Ateneo high school infirmary had six cases. The next day, Tuesday, the number rose to 16; on Wednesday, 5; on Thursday, 7; and on Friday, 14.

When classes resumed Monday, 16 high school students were sent home due to fever. Then yesterday, the number went down to 15, according to Badillo.

The nurse said some high school faculty members also did not report for work due to fever.

"Definitely, it's viral. They must have inhaled it," Badillo added.

Besides running a fever, the students also complained of cough, colds, and headaches, she said.

"Their temperature hovered around 38 to 39 degrees Celsius," Badillo said. Students who have a fever of more than 38 degrees were sent home.

The victims live in different parts of Metro Manila, not just from Quezon City and Marikina. Some of them come from Makati and as far as BF Homes in Parañaque and Ayala Alabang in Muntinlupa.

Because of what happened in other schools, Ateneo health officials were extra-alert and careful about complaints from their students.

Lots of water and Vitamin C

Badillo said the Ateneo high school department was set to issue a memorandum to parents to remind them to take precautionary measures for their children, like taking lots of Vitamin C and avoiding crowded places.

The school director of Poveda Learning Center denied reports that 100 students from the school were taken to the hospital yesterday.

"We deplore the irresponsible reporting about the cases of flu among our students. Because of the unconfirmed reports, havoc has been created and parents are alarmed," Estrella Macrohon said.

"We appeal for sobriety and calm. Classes will go on as usual," she said.

Absences

While she admitted that there were more than 100 absences, she stressed that these were for varied reasons.

She claimed that only 18 out of the more than 2,200 Poveda students were sent home by the school physician because "they were sick."

Macrohon said the students suffered mostly from slight fever, which she attributed to the erratic weather.

"The school administration has been taking measures such as fumigating and disinfecting the campus. We are likewise advising our sick students to stay home," Macrohon said. ***With a report from Reuters***

Germ warfare: What the real thing is like

(From pageA1)

filled with people complaining of a similar febrile problem as yours.

So many patients, and only a few remaining healthy medical personnel to attend to everyone.

You progressively become weaker, your vision dims.

Still unattended in the ER, you pass out and when you wake up, you're at home, in your bed.

You thank God everything was just a bad dream.

But biological warfare is not just a dream.

A lingering fear of many people is that the next world war won't be won with bombs and sophisticated weaponry but with virulent germs that can maim, paralyze and kill tens of thousands, most of whom are likely to be civilians.

Biological or germ warfare refers to the use of highly pathological or disease-producing agents to destroy humans, plants and animals.

Infected patients may experience varying symptoms, depending on what organism is involved.

The common denominator though is that most patients will manifest flu-like symptoms. Aside from fever, muscle pain and swollen glands, some may have skin eruptions, bleeding, vomiting or diarrhea, and show signs of involvement of vital organs like the brain, heart, kidney and liver.

Clustering

Predominant clustering of cases in the affected populations will be noted.

Our Department of Health has admitted that we do not have sufficient resources to neutralize a widespread onslaught of germ warfare.

But we can try hard to prevent it, and should it occur, to contain and minimize the devastation. It's easier said than done, but a more than best effort to achieve this should help.

Paranoid precautions in protecting food and water sources and strict monitoring and checking of possible criminal use of potential means to spread the organisms (such as insecticide-fogging and other aerosol equipment and crop-dusting planes) will go a long way in aborting attempts at germ dissemination.

Airport authorities should also double check those who identify themselves as scientists or researchers and carry small glass Petri dishes or other containers of laboratory media used for culturing microorganisms.

All it takes is a few of such growth medium containing the deadly organisms and it can easily spread like bush fire during summer.

In the event of an actual contamination, early detection is imperative to identify the source of infection and to isolate immediately the infected persons to prevent further spread of the pathological organism.

Preventing a widespread epidemic should be attained at all costs. This early, identification of facilities to isolate affected individuals should already be made.

Possible clustering of afflicted individuals should always raise some suspicion. This is one instance when over suspicion is allowable and it would be better to err on the safe side, of course without causing undue alarm and panic to the public.

It's reassuring to hear that a contingency plan for such a crisis exists and that DOH personnel have been trained, and are continuously being trained, to handle such a situation. The hard-working Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit is personally attending to this.

But during a full-scale aggression with biological weapons, the sad truth is we may be helpless.

Our best defense is to pray hard that God does not allow it to happen. In this day and age when man's propensity for destruction breeds ingenuity that can topple giant edifices and decimate a city, only God's protection can provide the fortress against a determined enemy with the modern capabilities for germ warfare.

A little history

In the 14th century siege of Caffa (now Feodosiya) in Ukraine, the chronicles reported that the Mongols hurled bodies of plague victims over the walls of the Genoese defenders. A massive epidemic called the "Black Death" ensued, killing hundreds of Genoese.

In World War I, Romanian cavalry horses and livestock were infected with glander-producing bacteria. These animals were shipped to the Allies, which caused widespread disease.

A book by Williams and Wallace about germ warfare during World War II contains a translation of a Chinese accusation of Japan's use of the plague bacteria, that was allegedly disseminated in several Chinese cities using airplanes.

This complaint was reportedly submitted to the British government and the Committee for the Pacific War by Wellington Koo, the Chinese Ambassador to London. The communiqué read:

"On at least five occasions during the first two years, the Japanese armed forces have tried to employ bacteriological warfare in China. They have tried to produce epidemics of plague in Free China by scattering plague-infected materials with airplanes."

The Chinese also made another complaint about the use of germ warfare by United Nations forces during the Korean War of 1950-1953. No substantiation was however done.

Today, various reports claim that countries have been secretly conducting research to develop the capability to either employ germ warfare or to defend themselves from any nation that uses it.

No country has ever admitted doing research on germ warfare or on its deliberate use in any war, nor has any accusation about the use of biological weapons been convincingly proven.

In 1972, a treaty was signed by more than 70 countries strictly prohibiting the production, stockpiling or development of germ or biological weapons. Those that had existing stockpiles at that time were required to destroy them.

Shared fear

But a shared fear among many is that secret experiments are still going on in various parts of the world. Herein lies the big problem.

Germ warfare can really get out of control. No country can ever claim to be adequately prepared for this problem. No one can be confident in determining how capable or incapable one can be for germ warfare because of the lack of sufficient knowledge of what potential enemies may be capable of.

A country may have developed the vaccines and antidote for well-known organisms such as smallpox or the Ebola virus, but there are at least a dozen other virulent microorganisms, or perhaps resistant strains of the known organisms, that even developed countries may not be prepared to handle.

Occasional disastrous accidents, in the form of epidemics, have been suspected to have arisen from such undivulged researches but these are, again, all unsubstantiated.

But as they say, the absence of proof is no proof of its absence.

The employment of germ warfare, if true, was crudely done during previous wars, yet it was effective enough to kill hundreds and thousands of targeted populations.

Should it be used now, likely with more virulent skeins that have been developed, the toll on humans and all forms of life would be unimaginable. Perhaps unbearable would be a more appropriate word.

For instance, a spoonful of botulinum toxin, infecting canned food sources, can multiply rapidly in 72 hours to produce enough poison to destroy 50,000 or more human lives. And that's just for starters.

Spread around some Petri dishes teeming with smallpox and Ebola viruses and that should maim a good portion of the population before whatever vaccine developed abroad can arrive in time to save lives.

For the remaining who are strong and lucky enough to survive this holocaust, water and food sources contaminated with exotic viruses like Junin, Kumlinge and Congo-Crimean hemorrhagic viruses, should be able to kill as much of the population as targeted by the evil schemers.

These viruses are not that well known and have no known vaccines yet.

If animals and livestock are also targeted, then aerosol spraying of anthrax, brucella and tularemia should do the trick.

On a mass population scale, these biological bombs can sometimes be more lethal and disabling than atomic bombs. To think that it can cause a progressively painful death makes death by a nuclear bomb more humane.

(Dr. Castillo writes the column "Medical Files" in the INQUIRER's Science/Health section every Saturday.)

Erap asks Sandigan to 'nullify' hearing

(From page A1)

Estrada is expected to be more formally dressed in his usual barong Tagalog at today's arraignment.

He will also likely refuse to enter a plea, consistent with his refusal to do so in his earlier arraignment on plunder charges. In the latter case, the court entered a plea of not guilty for the accused.

Emergency

In the motion to nullify the proceedings, called a motion for vacatur, Saguisag tried to explain to the court his very hectic schedule since Monday.

He said that his wife, former Social Welfare and Development Secretary Dulce Saguisag, "awoke in pain" and that he was not able to leave her until she felt better later in the afternoon.

"She had just come back from a checkup as a breast cancer survivor. Every hour on the hour yesterday, we were checking if she was all right and did not dare go away very far until she felt better late in the afternoon," Saguisag said in a footnote to the motion.

He said that he had never committed to attend the Oct. 1 hearing.

"Younger, we would not have minded. Today, we would like to have at least two to four hours of sleep before going to trial the next day," he said.

He also said that he had rushed a memorandum for another court case, and that he had also helped Middle Eastern clients who were allegedly being harassed because their pictures were shown regularly on TV juxtaposed with pictures of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the United States.

The Sandiganbayan on Monday appointed lawyers from the Public Attorneys Office to represent the fallen leader in the absence of his counsel.

'Lynching'

Saguisag said the Ombudsman's office was in a rush to convict Estrada, remarking, "they want to lynch my client."

The human rights lawyer and former senator also said Estrada's lawyers were not worried about being cited for contempt. "I am used to getting jailed. I am used to getting fined. We are ready to face the consequences," he said.

In the motion, Saguisag said that he and the other defense counsels "had not been attending (the hearings) as of late precisely because of certain conflicts in schedules."

"Accused Estradas had no lawyer (on Monday) for all legal and practical purposes and the proceeding was a nullity. A vacatur is indicated," he said.

"Yesterday, we stayed away. The message we got last night was we should have attended! It is nice to be missed but the feeling we had was 'we can't win.'"

In a hastily convened press conference yesterday, Overall Deputy Ombudsman Margarito Gervacio condemned "in very strong terms" the decision of Estrada and his co-accused son Jinggoy to show up at the trial in casual attire and the lawyers' boycott.

Estrada had branded his summons "judicial terrorism" and repeatedly interrupted the proceedings to ask to be allowed to leave.

Gervacio retorted: "On the contrary, it's the considered view that (what he did) was an act terrorizing the judicial system because we can't believe that his nine lawyers could all be absent at the same time. This only means that that was a concerted move planned by the accused and the defense lawyers."

He also said Estrada lawyers could not say that they were not informed of the scheduled hearing, since the court issued the order as early as August.

Drama

He likened the start of the landmark trial to a "drama" starring Estrada, his co-accused and his "disappearing lawyers."

But unlike he did in his movies, "this time Estrada will not win in the end," Gervacio said.

Gervacio said the jailed ex-president should stop living in a make-believe world. "Maybe when Estrada moved for the hearing's postponement and charged the court with 'judicial terrorism' he (was) still be living in his own make-believe world as an actor," he said.

Gervacio said the deposed leader should stop "acting" since he was no longer in front of the camera. "He is now being tried before the whole world for real crimes," Gervacio declared.

But Estrada, in a television interview late Monday, said he was not afraid.

"I will emerge stronger from this trial," he said.

The court has scheduled the next plunder case hearing on Oct. 17.

For their part, militant groups renewed their calls to the government to move Estrada and Jinggoy from their hospital detention suite to a real jail.

"The Estradas are high-risk persons capable of launching during escapes. The anti-graft court should see the merit and justness of putting them behind bars," said Rodolfo Sambajon of the fisherfolk group Pamalakaya. ***With reports from AFP; Andrea Trinidad-Echavez***

FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS

3 Archers confined in hospital

By Dennis U. Eroa

THREE LA Salle Green Archers, two of them playing crucial roles in their dream showdown with the Ateneo Blue Eagles, are presently confined at the Manila Sanitarium after experiencing flu-like symptoms.

As a result of their sudden confinement yesterday, 6-foot-6 slotman Manny Ramos and 6-foot-4 Adonis Sta. Maria are doubtful starters as the Green Archers attempt to wrap up the UAAP best-of-three title series against the Blue Eagles tomorrow at the Araneta Coliseum.

Ramos poured in eight points and grabbed 13 rebounds, keying La Salle's fourth-quarter blitz with 6-foot-6 Carlo Sharma. Sta. Maria scored just five points but has lifted the Green Archers' inside game with his defense.

With the one-game suspension slapped by the UAAP technical committee on Sharma, the failure of Ramos and Sta. Maria to suit up will leave La Salle with a gaping hole in the middle. Only 6-foot-5 rookie Mike Gavino and 6-foot-3 Willy Wilson will remain to battle Ateneo big men Enrico Villanueva, 6-foot-5, Paolo Bugia, 6-foot 6, and 6-foot-4 Rich Alvarez in the middle.

"I felt weak," said Ramos. Sta. Maria said "he felt dizzy."

Attending physician Dr. Raul Morena said Ramos suffers from acute tonsillitis, while Sta. Maria has respiratory tract infection. "At the moment, I can say that I see no relation to what has happened in the metropolis. But we'll have to wait for further tests to know whether they can play on Thursday."

Morena also ordered reserve player Vincent San Diego, 6-foot-8, to confinement but for reasons not related to the flu-like symptoms being exhibited by Ramos and Sta. Maria. San Diego is down with diarrhea.

Other La Salle players who were rushed to the Manila Sanitarium after complaining of heavy breathing, dizziness and headaches before their regular practice at the La Salle Gym in Taft were pointguard Eric Arejola, Joseph Yeo, Miguelito Gozum, Mika Vainio, Wilson, Michael Padolino and Jose Aguirre.

Mike Cortez, Mark Cardona and Ren Ren Ritualo also went to the Manila Sanitarium with their teammates but were given perfect bill of health.

Meanwhile, Anton Montinola, president of the UAAP board, assured the public that Game Two will be held as scheduled tomorrow at the Big Dome. "I've already talked with Bro. Rolly (Dizon) about this matter," Montinola said.

STA. MARIA

Laguna tests Cebuana San Juan vs Ecija

THEY'VE done it before, there's no reason why the FedEx Laguna Lakers can't repeat over the Cebuana Lhuillier Gems today.

This in mind, the rampaging Lakers try to assert their superiority over the Gems when they collide at 5:30 p.m. in the MBA Second Phase at the Cebu City Coliseum.

Showing their offensive might, the Lakers routed the Gems, 115-95, on Wednesday and then followed it up with a record 142-107 victory over the TPG Davao Eagles on Sunday. Both games were held at the San Luis Sports Complex in Sta. Cruz, Laguna.

That winning score is an all-time league high and so is the combined output of 249.

Chris Clay will again be the Lakers' go-to-guy with help coming from Jeffrey Flowers, Biboy Simon and Richie Melencio.

Despite their easy win over the Gems in their first encounter, the Lakers, who hold a 3-win, 2-loss record, are expected to have rough sailing tonight because the Gems are playing at their homecourt.

The Gems also seem to have attained cohesion following their 83-78 conquest of the Negros Slashers in Bacolod City Sunday night.

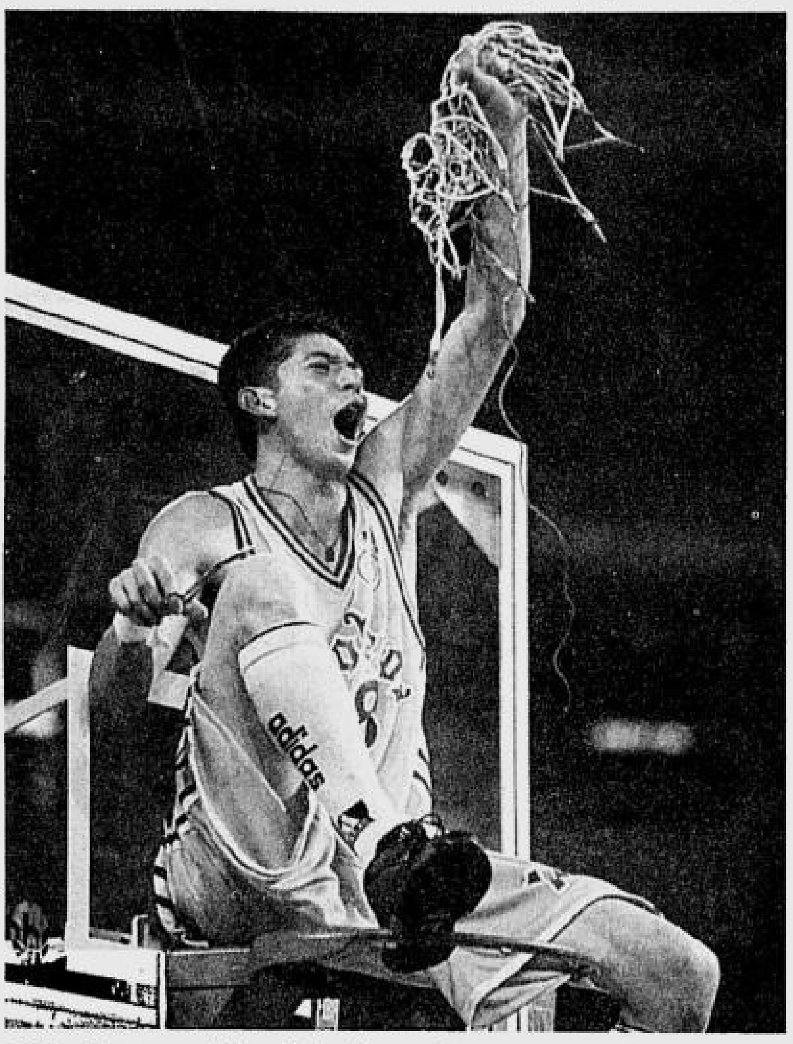
Andok's San Juan tackles Nueva Ecija in the 3 p.m. opener at the San Juan Gym.

Roy Luarca

GAMES TODAY
(San Juan Gym)
3 p.m.—Nueva Ecija vs Andok's San Juan
Cebu City Coliseum
5:30 p.m.—FedEx Laguna vs Cebuana Lhuillier

SECOND PHASE
Standings

Northern Con.	W	L
LBC Batangas	5	0
Andok's S. Juan	2	1
FedEx Laguna	3	2
Nueva Ecija	2	3
Southern Con.		
Negros	3	1
Cebuana Lhuillier	1	2
TPG Davao	0	2
Socsargen	0	5



PAUL Reguera of San Sebastian exults. ROMY HOMILLADA

Stags NCAA champs

(From page A20)

scoreless for six minutes bridging the third and the fourth as though bewitched by the delirious San Sebastian crowd.

"I wasn't expecting a blowout. All I had asked for was for the boys to play tough defense in order to stop JRU's scorers," said SSC coach Turing Valenzona, who steered the Stags to five straight titles in the mid-90s.

Although the one-sided affair augured another dynasty in the making, Valenzona ruled out that possibility, explaining that teams like Mapua and College of St. Benilde would give the Stags a run for their money.

"I have a group of upcoming players who could still win the championship next year. But other teams like Mapua and St. Benilde are also improving by the year," Valenzona added.

Only Macapagal and Bernard Mercado are expected to move over to the professional ranks, leaving the Stags' offensive chores to Pep Moore, Roy Falcasantos and Christian Coronel, who won the Finals MVP.

As for the Bombers, the elusive search for the title continues after failing to break their losing spell for almost three decades.

"We just have to start all over again. Scout players and rebuild," said JRU coach Boy de Vera, who lost his second championship series in a span of three years.

Second game (seniors)

SAN SEBASTIAN 95—Macapagal 21, Najorda 16, Coronel 11, Moore 10, Alfad 7, Uy 6, Legarde 6, Falcasantos 5, De Leon 5, Reguerra 4, Gonzales 2, Baluyot 2.

JRU 62—Capus 14, Epondulan 13, Gregorio 10, Villarin 9, Te 3, Finuliar 2, Valena 2, Lazaro 2, Jorge 2, Fajardo 2.

Quarters: 23-18, 43-35, 62-44, 95-62

Marave, Anton win

ROSARIO, Batangas—Pepon Marave ruled the Asian Formula 3 Challenge, while Carlos Anton dominated the Formula Toyota Cup on another day of triumph for the Shell Racing Team at the Batangas Racing Circuit here Sunday.

Finally reaping the fruits of his long labor, Marave came away with his first victory in the centerpiece Asian Formula 3 Challenge, good for 35 points and fourth place overall with 79 points.

Marave clocked 32 minutes and 38.623 seconds in the 10th round, 12.357 seconds ahead of Alvendia. He also posted the fastest lap time of 1:13.454 in the fourth lap.

The 12-part series is organized by the Batangas Racing Circuit Association and sponsored by Shell, Toyota, Kilton Motors, MOF Company, Norkis-Yamaha, Marlboro, Casino Filipino, CGU Insurance, Llumar, Shell Helix; Shell Velocity and Shell Citibank Mastercard.

Marave's previous best showing in the five-man event was second place in the seventh round.

Philip Alvendia of Kart 1 finished second to Marave with 27 points, but remained in third place overall with 97 points behind Jojo Silverio of Standard Insurance-Caltex-Team Toms and Mark Goddard of Ghiasports.

Silverio finished with only 20 points for the day, but kept the overall lead with 147 points with only two rounds remaining.

Mighty Mike . . .

(From page A20)

better served by this truly meaningful program. At present, some big corporations with a heart of gold and individuals of substantial means include San Miguel Corp., Caltex, Shell, Petron, Coca-Cola, Photokina Marketing Corp. and sports patrons such as Ambassador Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, taipan Lucio Tan, brothers Jose and Aristeo Puyat, longtime benefactors of bowling and billiards; George Chua, franchise owner of Batang Red Bull in the PBA; Sandy Javier of Andok's fame and amateur boxing supporters William Gatchalian, Vic Vic Villavicencio of the Triple V Group of companies, Ernie Yu of Pagoda Philippines, Pacific Concrete Products and Pacific Heights.

Because the private sector plays an important role in the country's sports development program, sports leaders should be self-reliant and should not depend on the government agencies for financial assistance all the time. There are many ways to source out funds.

As PSC Commissioner Weena Lim aptly said: "Self-reliance (in marketing) is needed to ensure the success of all sports, including the 3rd Batang Pinoy sportsfest in December this year. And tapping private sponsors is one way to spell success."

"It would be impossible to imagine a sports event to become successful without private sponsors," said lawyer Billy Payne, then CEO of the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, the organization that raised and spent more than $1.5 billion for hosting the Centennial Games in 1996. "They are the engine that drives the whole operation."

Some of the private support are even very basic. Book author Skip Rozin said, "Coca-Cola, a longtime sports sponsor, provides recreational beverages for all Olympic functions around the world, as well as sports drinks for the training centers and at the Games."

* * *

For inquiries, call fax/phone (044)933-1214.

Pop battles Talk N Text; Thunder face Hotdogs

Games Today (Araneta Coliseum)
5:05 p.m.—Pop Cola vs Talk N Text
7:10 p.m.—Red Bull vs Purefoods

REJUVENATED by their recent accomplishments, Pop Cola and Purefoods are expected to exude confidence against dangerous foes today in the PBA Governors Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Panthers, who began the season-ending conference with losing escapades, are on a three-game roll, a drastic momentum shift which they will maximize against the Talk N Text Phone Pals at 5:05 p.m.

Frustrated in a recent out-of-town game in Dumaguete City, the Phone Pals attempt to avenge a 99-85 defeat against Red Bull and fortify their hold of solo second with a 4-1 win-loss record.

The Hotdogs are raring to use the Thunder in their 7:10 p.m. encounter as fuel to stoke the fire of their new-found confidence.

Peñalosa to Japan's Honda?

IF PLANS do not miscarry, Gerry Peñalosa may yet be handled next by Akihiko Honda Jr., the internationally known Japanese promoter with an unblemished reputation in boxing history.

Lawyer Rudy Salud, Peñalosa's ertswhile manager, said yesterday he will fly to Bangkok on Sunday with Jun Sarreal to negotiate the deal with Honda. The three will use the World Boxing Association convention in Bangkok to launch Gerry's comeback.

"I met Mr. Honda's late father Akira in the '60s when Akihiko was still a teenager," said Salud. "The Honda family in Japan are very much respected. Under Akihiko, I know Gerry would be in good hands."

Salud and Honda had talked on the phone and the initial talks called for Honda to shell out $10,000 for Peñalosa as signing bonus for the contract transfer. Salud will match that amount for a total of $20,000 fee to Gerry.

New OTB

PHILIPPINE Racing Club Inc. (PRCI) in Santa Ana, Manila opens its newest Off-Track Betting (OTB) station at Padi's Mindave restaurant bar in Mindanao Avenue, Quezon City. The 510-seater Padi's Mindave plans to expand its OTB facilities to make it one of the biggest in Metro Manila before the end of the year. For inquiries, call 453-0080, 925-9281, 414-4930 to 34 or 925-3117.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled By
Lorenzo Manguiat

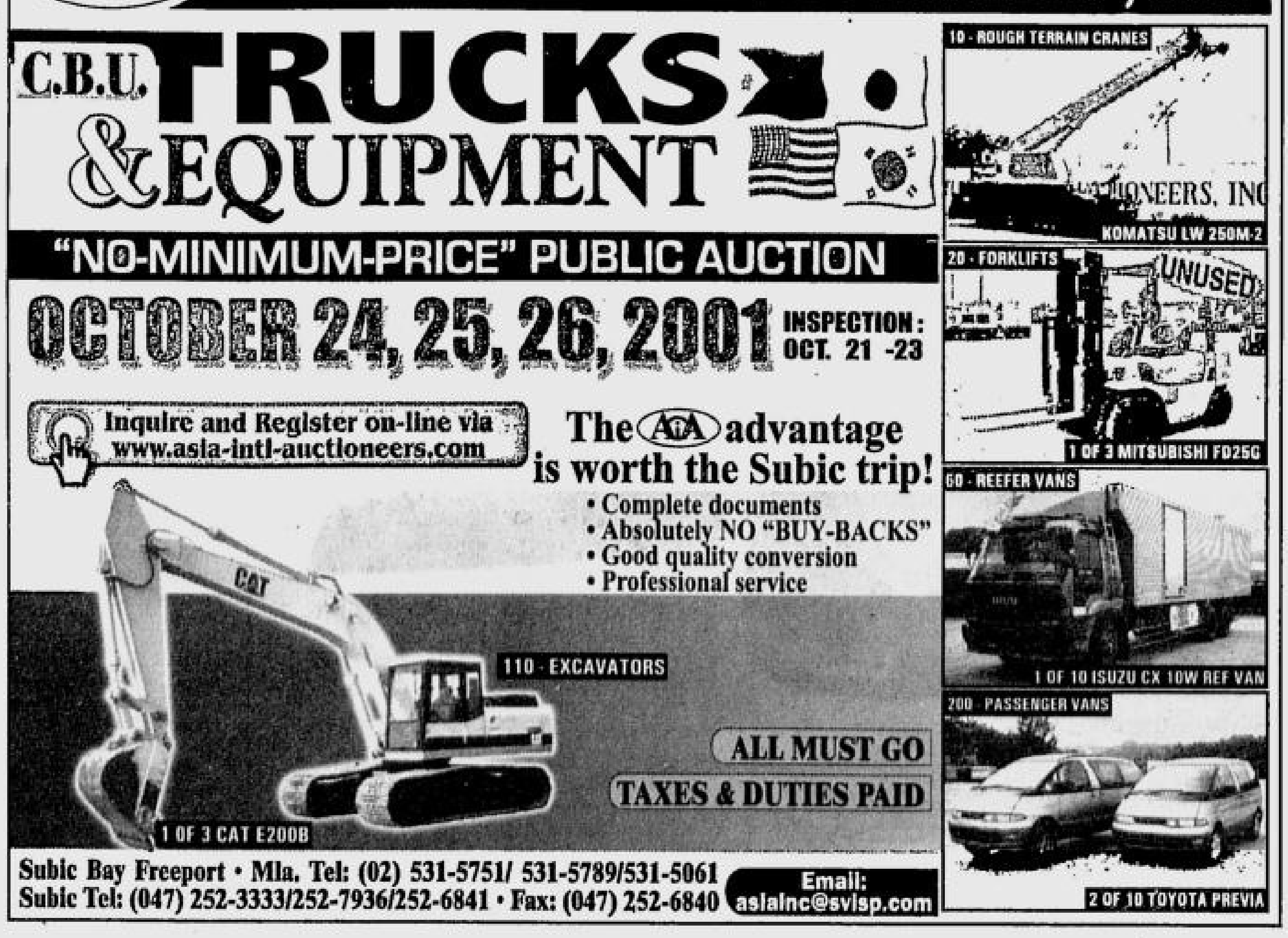
BASEBALL: MLB Division Series at 8 a.m. (r—5 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.) and tomorrow at 1 a.m. on ESPN

Baseball Max at 1:30 p.m. on ESPN

GOLF: PGA Golf Texas Open, Third Round at 2 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

BOXING: Fight Time on Fox 2001 at 9:30 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

MOTOR SPORTS: SBK World Superbikes Championship 2001 at 10:30 a.m. (r) on Star Sports



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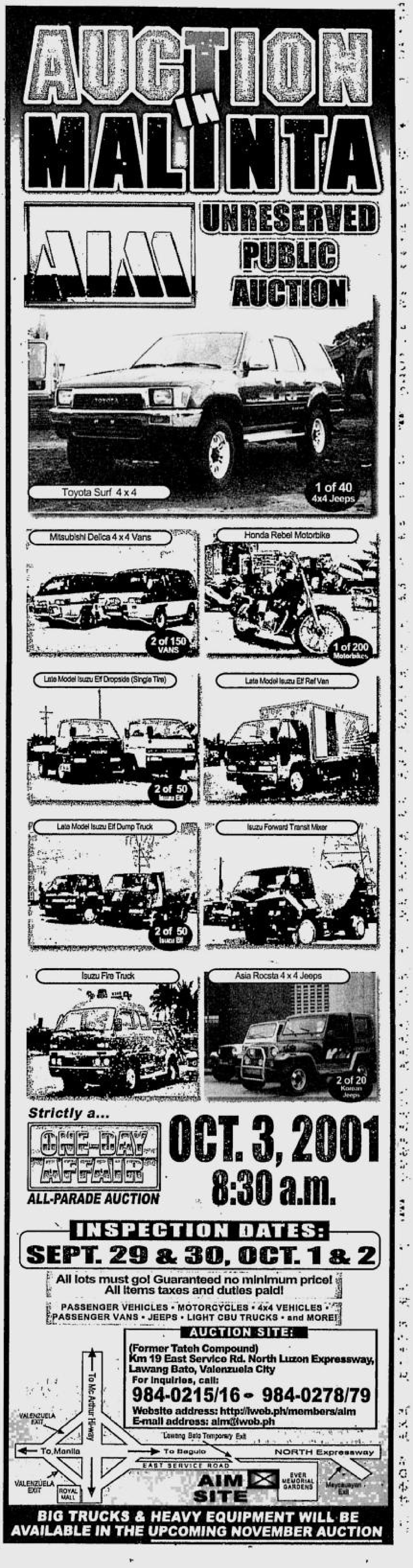

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■ Archers down with flu; PBA, MBA today; Peñalosa's new manager A19

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SPORTS

Al S. Mendoza, Editor ■ Edwin M. Villanueva, Assistant Editor

Stags NCAA champs

By June Navarro

SAN Sebastian College watched Jose Rizal University's offensive machinery go up in smoke as it scored a historic 95-62 blowout to capture the 77th NCAA men's basketball crown yesterday at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

Armed with sheer mental toughness, the Stags simply outclassed the dumbfounded Heavy Bombers throughout to register the most lopsided championship win in the league's history books en route to their 10th crown that tied San Beda College's number of titles won.

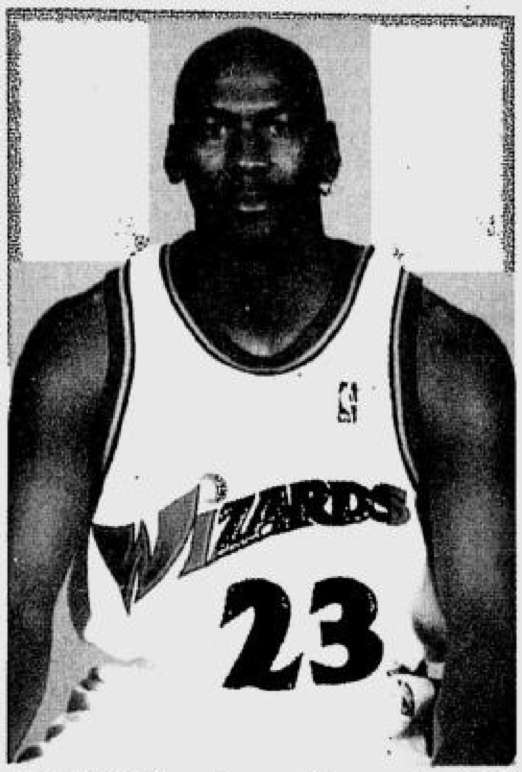
Lacking enough fuel, the Heavy Bombers conked out late in the second quarter as the Stags pounded their opponents with heavy blows from both the perimeter and three-point area.

CHRISTOPHER Intal delivered the game winning lay-up as Letran Squires outlasted the San Beda Red Cubs, 63-61, in overtime to capture the juniors crown. Intal quickly went for the basket following an assist off finals MVP Leland Ronquillo, with just a tick to go to seal the Squires' first title in 16 years. It was also their 10th NCAA juniors crown, the last was won in 1985.

The Stags wasted no effort in turning the game into a ghastly rout as Mark Macapagal knocked in nine points including a four-point play that saw them erect a 58-42 spread in the third canto.

From there, the Heavy Bombers failed to find their marks that held them

STAGS/ A19



JORDAN: "I'm not committing a crime." AP

'An itch that needs scratching'

WASHINGTON—If he fails, Michael Jordan won't regret it. If he embarrasses himself, he'll shrug it off. If he loses his final game, he'll live with it.

Jordan made it clear Monday his latest comeback isn't about succeeding in other people's eyes. It's about making peace with himself and giving basketball another chance before it's too late.

"It's an itch that still needs to be scratched here, and I don't want that itch to bother me for the rest of my life," he said.

Jordan, 38, took the stage at the Washington Wizards' home arena to explain in detail why he was returning to the NBA again, after an absence of more than three years.

Sporting a goatee, he answered every question in calm, measured tones, sounding a little defensive only once or twice.

"Everybody was so negative about what I was trying to do," Jordan said. "If I read every newspaper about negative things that I was trying to do, I swear I wouldn't live in America. America's supposed to be the free will to do whatever you choose, do whatever you want to do.

"That's all I'm doing. I'm not committing a crime here. I'm just trying to play a game of basketball.

"What if I'm tired of playing YMCAs or the Boys and Girls Clubs? I want to step into the elite competition. If I can do it, great. If I can't, that's great, too. But you can't take my six championships away. You can't take all the things that I've done."

If anyone has a problem with that, too bad.

"I'm not walking into this scenario thinking I'm failing. I'm walking in thinking I'm confident and I'm pretty sure that I can make it work. If I sit here and listened to everyone else tell me that I can't do it, then obviously I wouldn't be here," he said.

He characterized his motivation this way: "I'm all about challenges and seeing if I can go out and see if I can achieve something," Jordan said. "If, at the end of the day, I do it, great. If I don't, I can live with myself." *AP*

Mighty Mike

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

IT IS absurd for some people to complain about First Gentleman Mike Arroyo extending a helping hand to an ailing Philippine sports. In these hard times, Mr. Arroyo, using his gilt-edge reputation of clout and influence, is exactly what this trouble-wracked, cash-starved sports community needs at present.

Only recently, Arroyo projected an image of care and concern for sports when he sat down with officials of the Philippine Olympic Committee and Philippine Sports Commission, asking them to work in peace and unity while assuring them that funds will be coming from the private sector if they can get their act together.

"Peace and unity is the key," the First Gentleman said.

"The message is clear," said PSC chair "Butch" Tuason. "Funds, aside from those coming from the government, will come even for small NSAs (national sports associations) if we unite and work harmoniously."

Speaking of peace and unity, a planned demonstration last Monday by national athletes and coaches led by multi-titled weightlifter Jaime Sebastian was aborted when Tuason met with the disgruntled group. In the meeting, Tuason said the PSC would meet all their demands, particularly the improvements of their living quarters. He also said that his door is open to all of them and that they need not resort to protest actions to convey their sentiments to the PSC.

A day earlier, controversial track and field president Go Teng Kok appealed to the rally leaders not to push through with the demo. "Let's give peace a chance," he said, stressing, "I have no reason to oust Mr. Tuason. He was giving the athletic association enough support."

On the fund-raising scheme tapping the private sector, it is similar to the successful project director program of Gintong Alay under Michael Keon in the 1970s until the mid-1980s when leading business tycoons and top corporations sponsored the training of Filipino athletes who were

MIGHTY/ A19

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METRO
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SALONPAS
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For Intense Body Aches

'New Smokey Mountain' rising in Parañaque, residents complain

By Alcuin Papa

A MULTISECTORAL group has asked various government agencies to look into the presence of what it called an "unsanitary and illegal" dumpsite in Parañaque City which it said has caused sickness among residents.

Members of the Alyansa Laban sa Ilegal na Pagtambak sa Parañaque (Alapaap) over the weekend held a meeting to condemn the dumping of garbage near a cemetery in Barangay San Dionisio, Parañaque City.

Alapaap convenor Tito de Vera said the Parañaque dump could become a "new Smokey Mountain."

"The conditions of the residents there, especially the children, are really pitiful and bad," De Vera told the INQUIRER. "A lot of them are sick because of the garbage. Something must be done about it."

NEW SMOKEY/A22

CRUZ

Sheryl Cruz to make life and death decision

By Leah Salterio

THE CRUZ family is leaving it up to former movie star Sheryl Cruz to decide on the life of her father Ricky Belmonte, who has been in a coma since Sunday morning following a massive stroke.

Belmonte's niece, singer-actress Geneva Cruz, yesterday told the INQUIRER that her cousin Sheryl is expected to arrive "as soon as possible" from San Francisco, where she is based with her husband.

SHERYL CRUZ/ A22

WAZZZZUP?
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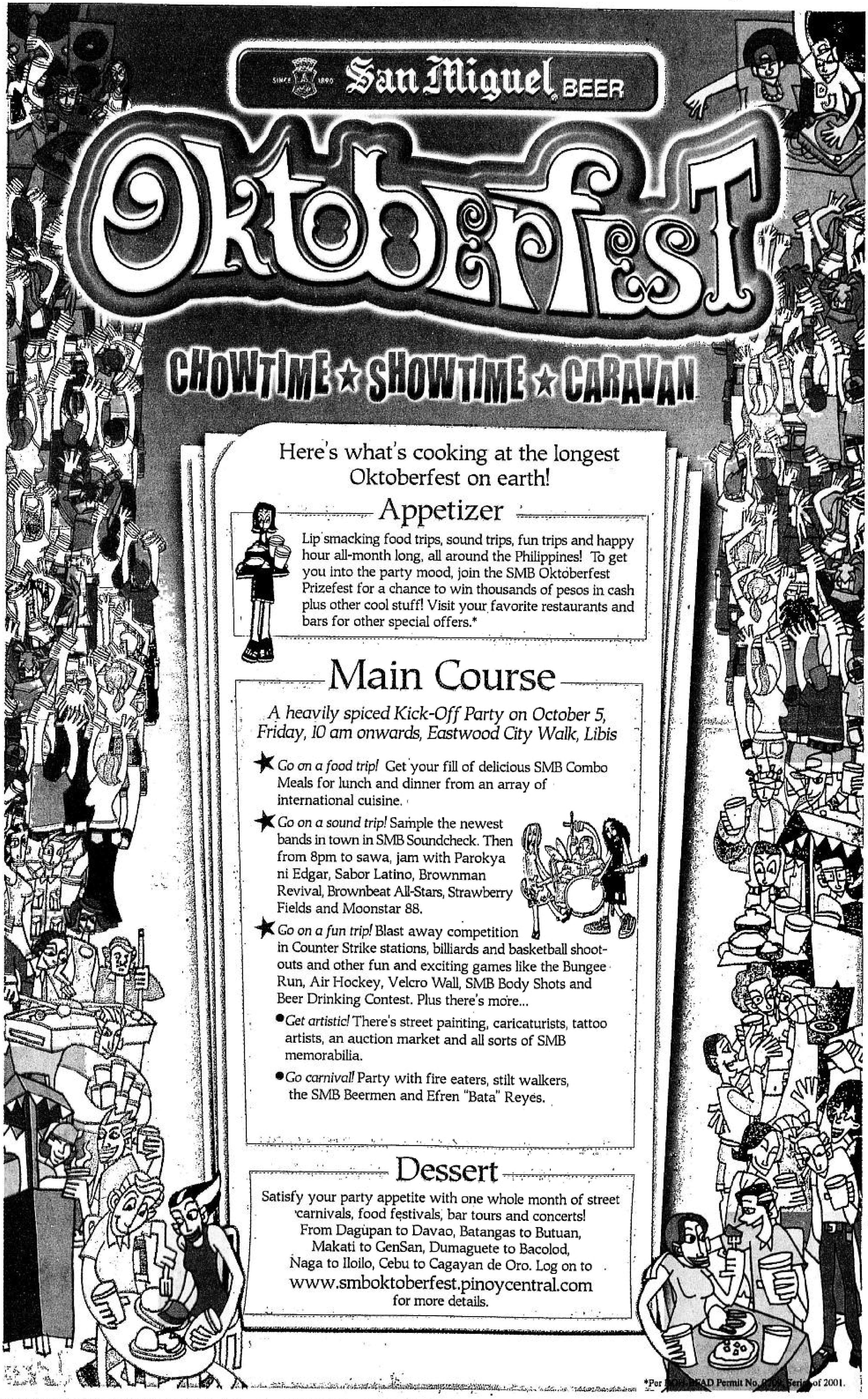

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Example: QUIZ 1 A

The world needs God-fearing fighters, not dirty terrorists

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

THE WORLD had a first view of the hooded international terrorist in Munich, courtesy of the Black September Movement, whose fanatical members set a record in mayhem with the killings of Israeli athletes that disrupted the 1972 Olympic Games.

But when people, who witnessed the World Trade Center holocaust, gather years from now, they would always refer to the Sept. 11 airborne attacks by Islamic fundamentalists as having broken the world mark in misery and gloom.

Let's all pray to our dear Lord, even to the gods of these blind, raging terrorists, that the devastation doesn't get equaled or broken in our lifetime. And, hopefully, not in future generations.

Now, what about record failures and their accompanying miseries in the world of sports?

We ourselves ranted, we felt very, very bad, after Onyok Velasco, obviously a victim of international cheats, missed out on his bid for a gold medal in the Atlanta Olympic boxing finals. There was marked displeasure hereabouts following that setback.

Gerry Peñalosa's failure to fight his usual brilliant fight in Yokohama on Sept. 24 could've also established a new record in national frustration.

Practically everybody we met the morning after was shaking his head in dismay.

* * *

Well, truth is, Filipinos don't own the world record in this division.

OK. There was no outdoor display of sadness and misery. But on Monday, every native Puerto Rican, who had basked in the glorious triumphs of national sports hero Felix Trinidad, wore his national flag at half-mast deep in his aching heart.

It was the morning after Bernard Hopkins, bigger and mightier, took the sting out of Trinidad and knocked out the sensational Puerto Rican who had been dubbed the finest pound-for-pound fighter on the planet.

There were no significant follow-up stories on the fight in our sports pages until yesterday, much unlike in previous Trinidad triumphs when Puerto Rico would erupt in wild revelry and declare a national holiday.

Who knows, maybe the wire service ringside correspondents themselves wanted to immediately forget what happened out there at Madison Square Garden, where raring and raging Puerto Ricans, many of them flying in from sunny San Juan, the sea-lapped capital, ended up nursing big broken hearts.

* * *

What happened to your nephew from Puerto Rico, friends greeted me the morning after.

Well, I saw what happened. Trinidad got beaten by a bigger man. Tito Trinidead lost to a sharper, wiser infighter who could take his best punches.

Maybe it was a stroke of mercy that Trinidad was knocked down by a perfectly executed right punch midway in the 12th and final round.

Merciful because, if the knockdown, which had forced Trinidad's father to jump into the ring in complete surrender, did not come, Don King could be expected to stage a dollar-rich rematch.

Well, from the look of things, Trinidad could challenge Hopkins half a dozen times and the poor kid would predictably end up the loser no less than six times.

It was obvious he became giddy after his triumph over William Joppy in their previous world middleweight title clash. But it can't be denied now that Trinidad has no business staying in the middleweight division—for as long as Hopkins, the undisputed executioner, is there.

* *

It is, of course, not the end of the road for Tito Trinidad.

He humbly admitted defeat, tried to cheer up his countrymen, and declared they would be sitting down to chart a new course.

You can also bet we would be seeing more of Gerry Peñalosa, definitely one of the most talented Filipino fighters ever to win a world crown.

Chances are, Gerry would be campaigning in the World Boxing Association and, based on very reliable sources, he could next be handled by a well-respected Japanese boxing man who doesn't go by the name of Joe Koizumi.

The WBA is slated to hold its annual convention in Bangkok this month and my informer, calling in from Dian Street in Makati, bared that he would join a Filipino party that would hold talks with WBA president Gilberto Mendoza in the Thai capital.

Gerry Peñalosa's prospective manager will also be in Bangkok to join an exploratory meeting with the WBA chieftain.

Gerry, who could still be licking his wounds, is born to fight.

So, just like with Felix Trinidad, he should be back inside the ring—soon.

You see, unlike dirty, unlamented terrorists, the world would be glad to again witness these two god-fearing, sweet-punching soldiers carve out masterpieces inside the boxing ring.

Manor survivors vow to fight on

By Andrea Trinidad-Echavez

SURVIVORS and relatives of those who perished in the Aug. 18 Manor Hotel fire yesterday vowed to continue their fight for justice amid reports that at least 10 of them had accepted monetary settlement from the hotel owners.

Today, the group is formally banding together to form an organization to strengthen their legal battle against Manor Hotel owners William and Rebecca Genato and corrupt government officials who could be held liable for the tragedy.

"We will definitely fight this out," said Pastor Abraham Ricanor, a survivor of the fire and one of the organizers of the group. "That is why we are forming this organization, to unite all our efforts in seeking justice."

Ricanor said the organizers would also get the commitment of members to pursue what they expect to be a drawn-out legal battle.

But aside from legal matters, the group would also agree on what projects to undertake to help the survivors and the relatives of the victims, he said.

He said they would establish a Manor victims' foundation, which would facilitate financial or other forms of assistance to the survivors and relatives of the victims.

The foundation would also extend help to those who have accepted monetary settlements from the owners of the hotel, Ricanor said.

"We understand (them)," he said in a telephone interview. "In fact, (after) we have settled everything and (when we) start embarking on our projects, we will also help them."

The counsel of the Genatos on Monday told the INQUIRER that at least 10 survivors and relatives of victims have executed affidavits of desistance in exchange for P40,000 each.

Benito Ambrosio, lawyer of the Genatos, said they expect more complainants to drop charges and accept instead a monetary settlement.

Ambrosio said the survivors and the victims' relatives took pity on the hotel owners and agreed to settle out of court after Mrs. Genato explained their side.

The Genatos, along with four other incorporators of the hotel, last week were charged with reckless imprudence resulting in multiple homicide before the Quezon City Metropolitan Trial Court.

At least 81 people died while scores of others were injured in the dawn fire that razed the six-story Manor Hotel.

Most of the victims were members of different province-based born again Christian groups who were, attending a three-day conference.

Lina forms team to probe P1M pencil purchase

INTERIOR and Local Government Secretary Jose D. Lina Jr. yesterday created a three-man committee to investigate the reported Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) purchase of P1million worth of pencils, pencil holders and erasers.

Lina named Undersecretary for Peace and Order Wencelito T. Andanar to head the investigating body, with head executive assistant Agripino Morga and legal service director Jose Emeterio Moreno as members.

"The committee shall look into the wisdom and propriety of the purchase as well as determine whether existing procurement procedures have been strictly followed," Lina said.

The committee would also try to find out who were the beneficiaries of the project, how and when the items were distributed and whether the items were actually delivered.

Lina clarified that the P979,200 worth of pencils, pencil holders and erasers were meant for distribution to public schools nationwide as part of the bureau's fire prevention consciousness and awareness program.

He said that while the BFP needs more fire-fighting equipment, it could not abandon its program to raise the fire prevention awareness of the public.

According to records that the BFP furnished Lina, a total of 24,000 pencils and sharpeners worth P979,200 were purchased as part of the bureau's public information program on fire prevention.

The BFP records also showed that the items were distributed to public schools from Regions 1 to the National Capital Region (NCR) including the BFP national office, with each region receiving 900 assorted items.

Sheryl Cruz to make life and death decision

(From page A21)

"We leave it up to her to decide," Geneva said. "Of course, we don't want Tito Ricky to go, but if it's God's will, we can't do anything anymore."

Sheryl is the second of Belmonte's three children. She left show biz when she decided to marry Norman John Bustos. They have a six-month-old daughter, Ashley Nicole.

Last Monday night, Geneva visited Belmonte, who is the first cousin of her father Boyet, at the Parañaque Medical Center.

"I would like to think there will still be a miracle," Geneva said. "We kept on telling him even when he's in bed, '*Kaya mo pa yan.*' Who knows what will really happen? We only want him to be peaceful."

Geneva has performed in concerts with her uncle, such as in Australia last year.

"We often see each other during family gatherings," Geneva said. "My dad and my mom (Marilyn) are both very close to Tito Ricky."

Her father is a member of the Cruz family singing group, the 747 Band which plays regularly at Captain's Bar of Mandarin Oriental Manila.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, October 3, 2001
26th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Ne 2:1-8
Gospel: Lk 9:57-62

As Jesus and his disciples went on their way, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

To another Jesus said, "Follow me." But he answered, "Let me go back now, for first I want to bury my father." And Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their dead; as for you, leave them and proclaim the kingdom of God."

Another said to him, "I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say goodbye to my family." And Jesus said to him, "Whoever has put his hand to the plow and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of God."

Commentary

Here is a sampling of would-be disciples for Jesus. The first one is sure of himself. He wants to follow Jesus without conditions. Jesus turns his attention to the demands of discipleship. Following Jesus is more serious than what many think. The second is called by Jesus himself. He is willing but with a condition. He asks to be first allowed to bury his dead father. Discipleship demands the great sacrifice to go beyond family ties. The third volunteers, but desires to see his own people first. Yet for Jesus, the call is an emergency. The follower of Jesus is also one with his life, his work, and his destiny. Following him is a sacrifice of security, family ties, and cultural values.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CRIMINAL LAW (AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES)—Treachery—Accused-appellants contend that the suddenness of the attack against the deceased alone does not constitute treachery. There must be evidence that the mode of attack was consciously adopted by them to make it impossible or difficult for the victim to defend himself. Moreover, accused-appellants maintain that the attack was frontal. Hence, the deceased had a fair warning of the impending attack. There is treachery when the offender commits any of the crimes against person, employing means, methods, or forms in the execution thereof which tend directly and specially to insure its execution, without risk to himself arising from the defense which the offended party might make. For treachery to be considered, two elements must concur: (1) the employment of means of execution that gives the person attacked no opportunity to defend himself or retaliate; and 92) the means of execution were deliberately or consciously adopted. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Mendoza, Second Division, People v. Amazan, G.R. Nos. 136251, 138606 and 138607, January 16, 2001]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

METROBRIEFS

Girl, 6, raped, drowned

THE NAKED body of a 6-year-old girl, who had also been raped, was found on the shore of Manila Bay in Navotas on Monday.

Daisy Cipres, of Leongson Street, Tabing Dagat, Barangay San Roque, was last seen walking with Michael Bala, 20, late Sunday night, said case investigator PO3 Noel Banares. Police arrested Bala a few hours after Cipres was found dead.

Yesterday, Bala was charged with rape with homicide before the town's prosecutor's office.

Police believed that Bala lured the girl to a dark area near the Manila Bay when he chanced upon her on her way to a convenience store.

Police said Bala could have raped the girl then drowned her.

Christian V. Esguerra

Caloocan trader robbed, shot

BUSINESSMAN Wilson Yao, 35, of William Shaw Street, Caloocan City, was robbed and then shot to death about 4 p.m. on Monday, police said.

Witnesses told police they saw armed men chasing Yao along Labahita Street in Barangay Longos.

The armed men shot Yao and robbed him of his money, gold ring, cell phone and other personal belongings, police said.

Authorities are still looking for the suspect who fled on foot after the shooting.

Christian V. Esguerra

1 killed in Rizal Park shooting

JEEPNEY driver Leopoldo Capanga, 41, was killed by a stray bullet while three other men were wounded when security guards of the Department of Tourism and of Rizal Park exchanged gunfire with three suspected cell phone snatchers Monday night.

A stray Capanga, of Fabie Estate, Sta. Ana, Manila, was hit in the abdomen, said SPO1 Benito Cabatbat.

Injured were park guard Brando Villanueva, 24, and vendors Carlito Legaspi, 40, and Joseph Gomboc, 33.

Police said an unidentified man approached DOT guards Reynaldo Maramay and Penabe Alonzo around 9 p.m. and reported that three young men snatched his 3210 cell phone at the Agrifina Circle.

The guards went after the three suspects who were still at the Circle and who drew handguns and fired at them. The guards fired back.

Jerome Aning

2 cabbies slain in QC, LP

TWO taxi drivers were killed in Quezon City and in Las Piñas City yesterday and on Monday.

Alex Remboa, 26, was stabbed to death when he and his friend fought 10 men in Quezon City over a waitress. Remboa, of Caloocan City, used his body to shield his unidentified friend from the knife thrusts of the 10 suspects, said investigator SP01 Fedencio Basibas.

The 10 men ganged up on Remboa and his friend when the two fought with the group over waitress Romilyn Tamayo, said to be the girlfriend of Remboa's friend. The stabbing happened around 1:30 a.m. near the Dreamland Restaurant on Del Monte Avenue in Barangay San Jose.

In Las Piñas City, TAI taxi driver Jose Balliga, about 60 years old, was found dead with a knife in the back, an apparent holdup victim.

SPO1 Roberto Alipalo of the Las Piñas City Criminal Investigation Division said residents found the body near Kamanay Extension, BF Evacom, BF International around 10 p.m. Monday.

Police said Balliga was last seen around 7 p.m. driving his taxi (PYT-862) with two male passengers.

Philip C. Tubeza, Alcuin Papa

Reporter's mom dies

PRECY G. Cabayan, mother of People's Tonight reporter Itchie G. Cabayan, died of cardiac arrest at the age of 57.

She is survived by her children Eduardo, Itchie and Imelda; Junior, Danny, Rodel, Vangie and Gil; and grandchildren Richelle, Arianne and Carl Angelo.

Her remains lie in state at the Don Bosco Hope Chapel on A. Arnaiz Avenue corner Amorsolo Street in Makati City.

New Smokey . . .

(From page A21)

The alliance, made up of residents of the area, environmental groups, non-government organizations, fishermen and youth groups, protested the dumping of garbage, which it said had piled up to 30 feet high, right in the middle of a residential and commercial area near Imelda Avenue (formerly Sucat Road).

The dumpsite, they said, is less than 200 meters from the new SM mall.

The group criticized government agencies like the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Metro Manila Development Authority and local government officials of Parañaque City for allowing the continued use of the dumpsite despite its ill effects on the health of residents and children in the area and the passage of the Clean Air Act and the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act.

In a letter of complaint sent to concerned government agencies, the group said garbage trucks have been dumping garbage in the area "under the noses of national government agencies without the necessary permits."

The group added that the dumpsite contained toxic materials that are hazardous to the health of residents in the area. Already, residents near the dumpsite have complained of pollution and disease symptoms, Alapaap said.

The group said the foul odor and dirt from the dumpsite have affected business establishments in the area including Shoemart, a McDonald's outlet, Dampa and Sunduan markets, Skytrek bar, Maxim's Tea House and the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

De Vera said more groups would join the alliance and participate in a series of mass action to close the dumpsite, which local city authorities claimed was a mere a transit point and a temporary site.

But De Vera noted that the garbage has piled up because the dumpsite has been in use for many years now.

Stories that Rio Diaz told me

By Abe Florendo

LIKE many people in Manila who've been hearing about Rio Diaz Cojuangco's unfortunate bout with cancer, I had imagined her as languishing in bed and losing her hair. Maybe not lying in bed but sitting in a sunny patio in the Cojuangco farmhouse surrounded by masses of mother-in-law Gretchen's blue-and-white hydrangea and watching her lovely children playing with husband Charlie's chickens in the yard.

Imagine my astonishment then when a Ford F150 pulled up at the cottage in Hacienda Balbina where we had been asked to wait and there was Rio behind the wheel and yelling at us to jump in!

She was no fading and languorous Camille but a picture of sunshine and cheerfulness in her pink-striped shirt, white chinos and white rubber shoes.

Rene Durian—he's Rio's manager and PRO—and I climbed into the van and so began a golden afternoon in Pontevedra with a woman with an infectious zest for life and extraordinary spiritual strength.

She tells us that she's driving us all the way up to the hills of Hacienda Ara-al where the Cojuangcos are having a picnic with their guests from Manila. The road slices across fields of sugarcane and groves of durian (no relation to Rene) with hedges alongside the road of shimmering eucalyptus trees and flaming caballeros. Rio keeps up a nonstop talk about her family, her doctors, and God's perfect plan for everyone of us. Every now and then she takes her right hand off the wheel to wave at barangay people clustered at the *sari-sari* store and at schoolchildren waking home from school.

She has been a show biz personality and formerly vice mayor of the town, and so she has the waving of the hand quite practiced.

Life in the spirit

She mentions that she's leaving again in a few days for San Francisco for another scan. "Name any scan and I've had it," she groans.

But she's not unduly worried. In fact, she's looking forward to seeing her doctor whom she had once invited to speak before cancer specialists in Manila.

When she talks about her life in the spirit, even about the gospels, Rio does not sound solemn; she may well be talking about her forthcoming interview with Boy Abunda. And just as casually, while revving up the vehicle for the uphill climb on a bumpy trail, she points to the neat stonework buttressing terraced shoulders done by skilled Igorots.

"One of their conditions for working here was to be provided with dog meat," Rio recounts, referring to the Igorots. "Well, they were told they could have all the stray dogs in Pontevedra. And that's what they didn't."

Shortly we reach the lop of Ara-al where on a neat lawn and under a tent the picnickers are having a great time feasting and bantering, among them Ryan Cayabyab and Kitchie Benedicto.

Since the improvised long table has no more room for us, we get the picnic table under a gazebo with a panoramic view of Bacolod City and beyond the hazy gulf to the east the island of Guimaras. In the opposite direction, looming behind the bluish foothills, is the revered Mt. Kanlaon.

See all these tall pine trees? Rio points out. "They were all planted by mom who got the samplings from the bureau. They practically dumped them on her. Somewhere down below (not seen from where we are) is the fabulous field of hydrangeas (also called milflores) also planted by Mrs. Gretchen Cojuangco.

Giggly, jittery

The mouth-watering picnic food consists of *paco* and shrimp salad, mango with a surprisingly delectable but unfamiliar leafy vegetable that the cooks from Hacienda Balbina say is gathered from the hills, spareribs, *lechon*, and of course chicken *inasal*, among others. "So much food," Rio sighs. But there's nothing here for me."

Nonetheless, she helps herself to the crunchy lechon skin, scrapes off the white fat and eats it (the skin, not the fat) with rice. We ask her what foods she has to avoid and she replies: "Anything out of a can and ingredients I cannot spell."

The long table is now ringing with laughter. Kitchie Benedicto is on her feet and launching into a story that has everyone in stitches, including Danding Cojuangco. Rio, who's listening to the story a couple of yards away, is both giggly and jittery.

SUNSHINE GIRL Rio with husband Charlie and their children: She has found her prince.

"Kitchie is telling about a funny thing that happened to my ex (Hajji Alejandro)," she says. "You know, I have never talked about him in front of my father-in-law."

About Danding Cojuangco, Rio says: "He likes to be left alone; he doesn't want to be fussed over." About Gretchen Cojuangco: "She's basically shy." But the lady Gretchen will not shy away from devouring a whole durian.

When Gretchen offers to scoop up the divinely decadent flesh of the durian for me, I politely say No, not for me, and Rio, who apparently has her own idea of how the divine smells, says, "Oh, he's just being considerate. He knows he's riding with me."

"Don't worry," says the lady Gretchen. "After eating the durian, put water on the inside of the rind, gargle with it, and it will cleanse your breath."

Three trees

We'll try that sometime. I really enjoy fresh durian, although it's like eating food for the gods beside a gutter.

Rio herds us into the van once more and drives us to Hacienda Adelina, a few kilometers away, to meet up with Paolo Bediones and the "Extra Extra" staff. Along the way she talks about picture words and tells us the story of three trees that I feel is one of the most beautiful stories I've ever heard. I want to share it with you:

FARMER'S WIFE shows the author the beauty and magic on God's little acre.

Three young trees were talking about what they would want to become. The first said it wanted to be turned into a treasure chest and hold the most valuable gems in the world. The second one said it wanted to become a ship and carry kings and powerful men across the seas. The third one said it would resist being cut down and forever stand tall.

Years later men with cutting tools came and felled the first tree and it was made it into a trough for the stable. And then they felled the second tree and it went into the making of a small boat. The third tree tried to hold its ground but it was felled nonetheless and then thrown in a corner of a carpenter's shop.

Years later the first tree, one extraordinarily starry night, saw that it was carrying a little babe and there were gentle shepherds and awesome kings on their bended knees beside it.

Years later, the second tree was being rowed across a river and there was young man standing astern who although dressed humbly radiated the light and glory of the king of kings.

Again years later, the tree abandoned in a corner was lifted up and was again standing tall and nobly carrying the weight of The Crucified.

Farmer's wife

I'm about ready to burst into tears when, with another quick change of subject, Rio launches into her humorous experiences as a farmer's wife. "If there's a green thumb, then mine is brown. The one plant, a bougainvillea, I ever planted in my life shortly died on me."

On one occasion she ventured to tour her guests around the haciendas. "That's a *pili* tree," she pointed out to them. The driver whispered to her, "'*Day*, that's an *ipil-ipil*." When next she pointed out, "That's an *ipil-ipil*," the driver nudged her, "That's a *pili*."

Well, now she can tell a mango from a durian tree if there are fruits to cue her.

The TV crew joins us at Hacienda Adelina and then we proceed to Hacienda Candelaria where they make the ECJ (that's for Eduardo Cojuangco Jr.) products like mango and jackfruit jams, banana and jackfruit pastilles, durian and breadfruit chips, salted and glazed pili (not ipil-ipil), and other delicacies processed from fruits grown on the farms.

Then she brings us back to Hacienda Balbina, around to the orchid laboratory and greenhouse where they grow spectacular hybrid orchids, to the yards where Charlie keeps his sheep and chickens, and to the big farmhouse filled with fresh flowers and antiques and, in the back, the garden designed by Sanders and made lush by Gretchen; beyond a huge dump of ficus is the ivy-covered chapel.

Real life

This is not show biz, this is real life, and Rio is living it like a devoted farm wife. She has only one reservation: She's scared of frogs. Gretchen had imported bullfrogs to deal with the mosquitoes breeding in the ponds and watery pools but the frogs have multiplied fast and they can sometimes be found in the bathrooms.

When we tell her to trying kissing one because it might turn into a handsome prince, Rio says, "I already have one."

Pontevedra is a 330-minute leisurely drive north from Bacolod, past the Bago River (first-time visitors are told to make a wish while crossing the bridge and it will come true) and Pulupandan, the hometown of Gretchen and of Lea's famous mother, Ligaya Salonga.

Pulupandan gives access to the island of Costa Aguada, a world-class resort owned by Gretchen's family, the Oppens, which appears like a mirage in the sea from the road in Villadolid.

Get yourself invited to Pontevedra sometime. It's a beautiful place. It's also where you will encounter a pretty girl named Rio who can make you see and appreciate more deeply the beauty and magic of life on God's little acre.

NANETTE INVENTOR

Funny woman says, take me seriously

PEOPLE have seen only the comic side of Nanette Inventor, in stand-up comedy shows, sitcoms and movies. But Nanette wants them to see the other side of her big self, as a singer.

The woman who wears 91/2 shoes says her show biz dream remains to be recognized as a "total performer." She wants to bring back her glorious days with the UP Concert Chorus, where she first sang before large crowds.

This interview takes place after Nanette has partaken of only a bowl of hot noodles. She orders coffee but can't help sampling the fish dish that another person has ordered. Later, she will also have a glass of red wine, "on doctor's orders."

Q&A

Despite her obvious efforts to control herself at the dining table, Nanette's new show sounds like it is about food. It's called "Menu" and it's on stage at the Republic of Malate on all Fridays of October starting Oct. 5.

In the interview, she talks about subjects other than food.

Will you fall for a younger man?

No. But there's this guy who's been courting me since four years ago. He's 28 years old now.

So why not him?

Naku, huwag. Mother *na ang dating ko.*

How come if the guy is older, *okay lang*? But if the girl's older, *hindi okay*?

Oo nga. Look at Tito Dolphy and Zsa Zsa (Padilla), accepted *sila*. Then we heard about Piolo (Pascual) and Pops (Fernandez), and they call Pops a "sugar mommy."

How come in Hollywood, Cher and Madonna fall for younger men and they don't get criticized?

But I believe girls mature faster than guys. So why will you get a younger man? *Parang humanap ka lang ng batong ipupukpok sa ulo mo.*

But if the guy courting you was older, would you have said yes?

Yeah. Maturity is important to me.

What's "Menu" about?

It's my 18th year in the business, so what better way to celebrate it than by having a "Menu" of different things?

It's a very small, intimate show at the Republic of Malate. It's going to be slices of life as presented in song and comedy. It's titled "Menu" because just like in a menu, you have several choices.

Do we see "Buding" being revived?

No. I just finished a series of shows on her. This is the singing side of Nanette. It has always been sidetracked. I always wanted to do this thing, garnish every vignette of jokes with songs. I want to bring back my UP Concert days and sing songs I've always wanted to sing, from the '60s, '70s, East-meets-West-kind-of music . . . a lot.

After 18 years, what can you say about your career?

Okay naman. Nagkaroon ng lows and highs, but I'm still here. The idea of being around year after year and never having the public tire of you. That alone is good. I hope there will be another 18 years of singing and comedy.

What were the highs?

Doña Buding, and when she came back she was still *sikat*. Performing at Carnegie Hall with the Apo Hiking Society before a standing room crowd. Going from one place to another abroad performing before different types of audiences. "Tit for Tat" with Mitch Valdes. When I won the grand prize in the Metropop for "Salamat Musika," composed by Gary Granada. I sang, I didn't do comedy. And it was not a novelty song.

The lows?

Getting out of Buding and going into Nanette Inventor. There was a show, "Foot and Mouth," at the Light and Sound. I was veering away from the character and I wanted to be myself. There was a good script, but it was so hard to get out of Buding.

I had to be myself and not the character. But in the way I was delivering the jokes, it was still Buding. The audience response was not that great.

Getting out of a TV show that had run its course, that's a low. I was part of the original "Abangan ang Susunod na Kabanata." And now, "Eto na ang Susunod na Kabanata" also folded up.

Nawala rin ako sa "1 for 3" on GMA, with Vic Sotto and Rosanna Roces. They replaced it with "Da de di do doo."

But I believe that when God closes a door, He opens windows. It's part of our work here in show biz.

INVENTOR

How will you compare Nanette Inventor then and now?

I have more resilience now. *Marami nang hagupit na natanggap ko.* Sometimes, you perform to audiences *na konti lang*. That's a real challenge.

I have mellowed, maybe because I've been through a lot of experiences. So I can take the pain.

What has been your most difficult experience?

When things don't happen the way you want them to happen, that's disappointing. I guess the audience can't accept the fact that I'm a serious singer. They always look for comedy every time I perform.

It happened when I did a lounge act. The audience couldn't take it that I would just sing. They were expecting jokes.

Will it ever come to a point that you would give up comedy and concentrate on singing?

I don't think it will ever happen. When I opened my mouth, *nagkakaroon ng* comedy. It naturally happens. Because I was launched as a comedienne, *hindi na mawawala 'yon.*

Hindi na ko pinapangarap na maging isang Lani Misalucha.

What do still want to do?

Just continue doing my best in whatever endeavor. Just continue doing my songs and jokes and just being there doing everything fresh and sustaining my career.

Gusto ni'yo siguro isang major concert, maybe at the Ultra? If that happens, why not? But I'm dreaming that people will look at me as a total entertainer.

Ang feeling *ko ako si* Laura Fygi who performs before royalty and I'm wearing a beautiful gown and a pashmina. But I know that will come. *Hindi ko ipipilit.*

When were you at your funniest?

When my father died in June 1997. It was so painful, but I was at my funniest. I did a corporate show and the people around me said I was at my funniest.

I was talking to an international crowd about the foibles of the Filipinos and how we could easily distinguish a Filipino even abroad. That was the script. It was the delivery, I guess, that made it so funny.

The president of Jollibee congratulated me after the show and said I was really funny. He didn't know there was so much pain inside of me while I was performing.

Do you miss having a partner?

I don't because I haven't experienced it and I still want it to happen. *Masarap 'yung may inuuwian ka rin, pero wala, eh.* But they say that there is always someone for somebody. So that will come. *Hihintayin ko na lang.* I'm living with my mom and my sister.

Should anybody get credit for creating or recreating Nanette Inventor?

No one.

What's the biggest lesson you've learned in 18 years?

Totoo 'yung sinasabi nila na the friends whom you saw on your way up are the same people you'll see on your way down.

Another lesson is to never give up, just get going until it gets tough.

Whom do you find funny?

I really, really find Mitch (Valdez) funny. I'm a fan of hers forever.

Who are the good singers for you?

Regine (Velasquez), Lani (Misalucha) and Zsa Zsa (Padilla). *Ang dami nilang magagaling.*

What about singing comediennes?

Mitch *pa rin.*

What was the biggest piece of intrigue written about you?

When I was still new in the business, they linked me with Tito Sotto.

Do you cook?

Whenever I can. I like preparing Kapampangan dishes, but I also experiment with Chinese dishes.

Where do you buy your clothes?

Hindi naman ako off the rack. But when I'm abroad, I shop for clothes. *Sa* Women's World at SM, there are big sizes for ladies. But some of the dresses I wear are Danilo Franco.

Is your mood related to your eating habits?

Even to my cooking. It gets saltier when I'm having PMS (premenstrual syndrome).

What was the worst thing said about you?

There was one writer who said "living up to the image of Doña Buding" *na raw ako.* Extravagant *na raw ako.* Maybe I didn't notice him after one show of "Buding sa Rizal" and he took it against me.

What is the downside of playing Doña Buding?

You go to a *tiangge* and the vendors find it surprising *'pag tumatawad ako.* They look for my glittering jewelry, but when I buy fake jewelry, *nagugulat sila.*

What do you still want to do?

I'd like to get into painting. I love colors. I have started but I'd like to get into it seriously. You can make it an outlet of your moods, your frustrations.

Movies?

Down *ang* movies *ngayon,* but I want to do a role similar to Glenn Close's Cruella de Ville in "101 Dalmatians."

I have an offer to do a serious role and I accepted it. I want to try it *naman.* I play a professional mourner for a Binondo crier's club. It's a very interesting role.

Where does most of your income go?

Food, but I also love shoes. I buy them abroad because I'm a size 9, wide. If ever I buy here, imported *din dapat,* like Nine West.

Every trip I make, I don't go home without buying footwear. Now, my guestroom is filled with shoes. There was a time when I had more than 1,000 pairs, but *naipamigay ko na 'yung karamihan.*

What's your real name?

Agnes Maritza. It's from a book, a character who is a Russian princess. When I was a kid, I couldn't pronounce Agnes. I would say "Agnet," then it became "Nette-Nette" until it became "Nanette."

Recording?

That's another frustration. But I thank God that the last album I had, "Sumpong," got seven awards from Katha.

Are you vain?

When it comes to shoes and underwear, yes. I like the underwear of Victoria's Secret or Marks and Spencer.

If you were slimmer, do you think you would have been a vamp?

Like Verni Varga? No, I cannot "Take Five."

I never imagined myself being a vamp. I never saw myself getting into that mold.

How old were you when you started getting big?

When I was born, I was already big.

How many times did you try to lose weight?

Many times. In high school, for one year, I was victorious because I lost 10 pounds.

When I was in my 20s, I tried this Ionamin tablet for four days *pero ang* effect *sa akin, nanginginig ako. Parang* arid *ang* throat *ko at nabubulol ako. Wala akong ganang kumain.*

Then I tried the natural way, by cutting down on food. I lost only five pounds. ***Louie C. Camino, Leah Salterio***

‘ORIGINAL SIN’

There’s sin, but not originality

BY RUBEN M. CRUZ JR.

REVIEW

ARE you one of those Mexican telenovela fanatics? If you are then, there’s a good chance you might enjoy “Original Sin.”

It has just as many plot twists, its characters are just as silly, and the dialogue is just as full of corny clichés. As a bonus, you get to see real Hollywood stars Angelina Jolie and Antonio Banderas get hot and heavy, and not under the sheets, mind you, but with no sheets at all.

Me? I just like the hot and heavy part. One of its bit players utters a perfect description of the film when referring to a play she is watching. She says: “Disgusting, cheap melodrama!”

As with a lot of B-movie films, the sexual pretext of “Original Sin” is its main selling point. Seeing Banderas and Jolie in the buff is probably the only thing that makes this film watchable for a lot of people. Whether you’d fall for it really depends on how appealing you find Jolie or Banderas in the first place.

Mail-order bride

The film is set in late 19th century Cuba and centers on the life of wealthy coffee plantation owner Luis Vargas (Banderas). Not wanting to get mired in the intricacies *of* courtship, and in the more complicated possibility of falling in love, Vargas posts an ad for a mail-order bride in America.

Why does the hunky Banderas need to go overseas for the sake of an unfussy marriage? Beats me, but let’s move on, shall we?

All right. So the wife, Julia Russell, arrives. She’s Jolie, of course, a real knockout, nothing like the plain Jane in the picture Banderas received and with whom he corresponded. Jolie, or Julia, tells Luis she didn’t mean to be deceiving but she just wanted to meet someone who will love her not only because she’s beautiful. Luis says it’s okay, because he’s not the plantation worker he told Julia he was either. He didn’t want a woman to fall for him just because he’s a rich landlord.

They exchange meaningful glances and then make wild, passionate love—a scene that is shot from an angle every conniving room boy in any motel chain would be familiar with.

Downhill

Everything is bliss a while until the movie shifts gears and becomes—or at least attempts to become—an Alfred Hitchcock-kind of suspense-thriller. But I’d rather not go into the details just in case you haven’t seen the film yet.

If you’ve seen the trailer, then you already know that Julia doesn’t turn out to be the wife Luis bargained for. Everything goes downhill from there, for Luis, and for the film as it fails to generate the kind of anticipation that is needed to prevent audiences from dozing off or at least to make them remain interested. Of course, the mood perks up a little when Jolie and Banderas get to take their clothes off again.

BANDERAS and Jolie in “Original Sin.”

Not to say that there’s nothing happening in the film. In fact, like I said, there are a lot of things happening. But the characters and the story are so artificial and the performances so obligatory that I pretty much stop caring what happens to whom.

No ‘Fatal Attraction’

You know when you huff and puff on a treadmill, and 30 minutes seem like two hours because you’re not really going anywhere? That’s how it’s like sitting through “Original Sin.”

The film gets all worked up trying to be an erotic thriller but it isn’t “Fatal Attraction,” and all it can be is a soft-porn flick with too much foreplay.

It’s a pity because both Jolie and Banderas are capable of good if not great performances. Jolie is even an Oscar winner for her role in “Girl Interrupted.” And they do look good together.

But the screenplay of writer-director Michael Cristofer based on Cornel Woolrich’s novel “Waltz Into Darkness” doesn’t give them anything to stoke their fires. Here, they just seem like two stage actors who’ve been in the same play for the longest time.

It’s a good thing “Original Sin” has no curtain call. They probably wouldn’t want the bother, and neither would the audience.

Mike Enriquez goes up against Kabayan on Saturdays

ENRIQUEZ has probed several cases on “Imbestigador.”

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

THE SATURDAY afternoon slot for current affairs will have more formidable competition when **Mike Enriquez**’s “Imbestigador” on GMA 7 moves from Wednesday night to compete with **Noli de Castro**’s long-running program, “Magandang Gabi, Bayan” on ABS-CBN.

Starting Oct. 6, “Imbestigador” will air at 5:30 p.m. Saturdays, simultaneously with “MGB.” “Imbestigador” will replace “Brigada Siete” which occupied that time slot for eight years before it aired its final episode last week.

Jessica Soho will host her own current affairs program and take over the 11 p.m. Wednesday night time slot to be vacated by “Imbestigador.”

“It’s not Noli and I against each other, but our programs,” he points out. “It happened before when he was still with ‘TV Patrol’ and I was doing ‘Saksi.’ This move for ‘Imbestigador’ was done after thorough study by management. According to demographics, the viewers’ preference on Saturday late afternoon is current affairs. That time slot has been the domain of current affairs for a long time now.

“I know ‘Magandang Gabi, Bayan’ is not just a formidable program, it’s an institution. But ‘The World Tonight’ is also an institution.”

Aside from the time slot, Mike does not expect a great change in “Imbestigador” when it starts airing Saturdays.

“The amount of work, effort, seriousness and enthusiasm does not change,” he says. “We only expect an increase in the threat level because the size of viewership is bigger on a Saturday afternoon than on a late-night time slot.”

After one year of hosting “Imbestigador,” Mike has given the program a pro-active and action-oriented approach to helping solve crimes.

“It has proven that it pulls no punches when it comes to championing the cause of the people,” Mike says of his program.

“Actually, ‘Imbestigador’ sometimes is a source of sadness for me when I see the people coming to us for help. Instead of going to the government agencies, they prefer to come to us. That means a breakdown of their trust in government institutions that are supposed to help them. We have a staff that works full-time just listening to the complaints of the people and planning what to do about them.”

“Imbestigador” operates within the bounds of the law, Mike says.

“We never apprehend anyone or file a case. The implementation of the law is not our job. There is due process. We help people in a very real, documented way. We give them hope.

“As a result of our exposés, we’ve seen closure of establishments, dismissal from work and apprehension. My staff and crew have been made legal witnesses to the cases. So for security reasons, we do not run credits at the end of the program.”

Mike has probed cases like kidnapping, bribery and white slavery on “Imbestigador.” He has received death threats through calls and text messages on his mobile phone and even verbal messages which are relayed to him.

“I had to change my cell phone number repeatedly. I do get scared. Even my wife now moves around with a bodyguard everywhere she goes. Fortunately, we don’t have children because we would surely be doubly worried for them.”

Two acting nominations

ALBERT Martinez won two acting nominations in the forthcoming Star Awards for TV, given annually by the Philippine Movie Press Club.

Albert was cited as best drama actor for “Ikaw Lang ang Mamahalin” and best single performance by an actor for the “Maalaala Mo Kaya” episode titled “Scrapbook.”

Star Awards will be held Oct. 6 at the UP Theater.

Prayers for the sick

JUST as show biz folks have been praying for a miracle for actor **Ricky Belmonte**, who is now in a coma at the Parañaque Medical Center, comedian-host **Ariel Ureta** is also requesting prayers for his son, **Aldo**.

The 17-year-old is also in the intensive care unit of the Cardinal Santos Memorial Medical Center in Greenhills, San Juan, after he was found to have brain tumor. He is said to be in critical condition.

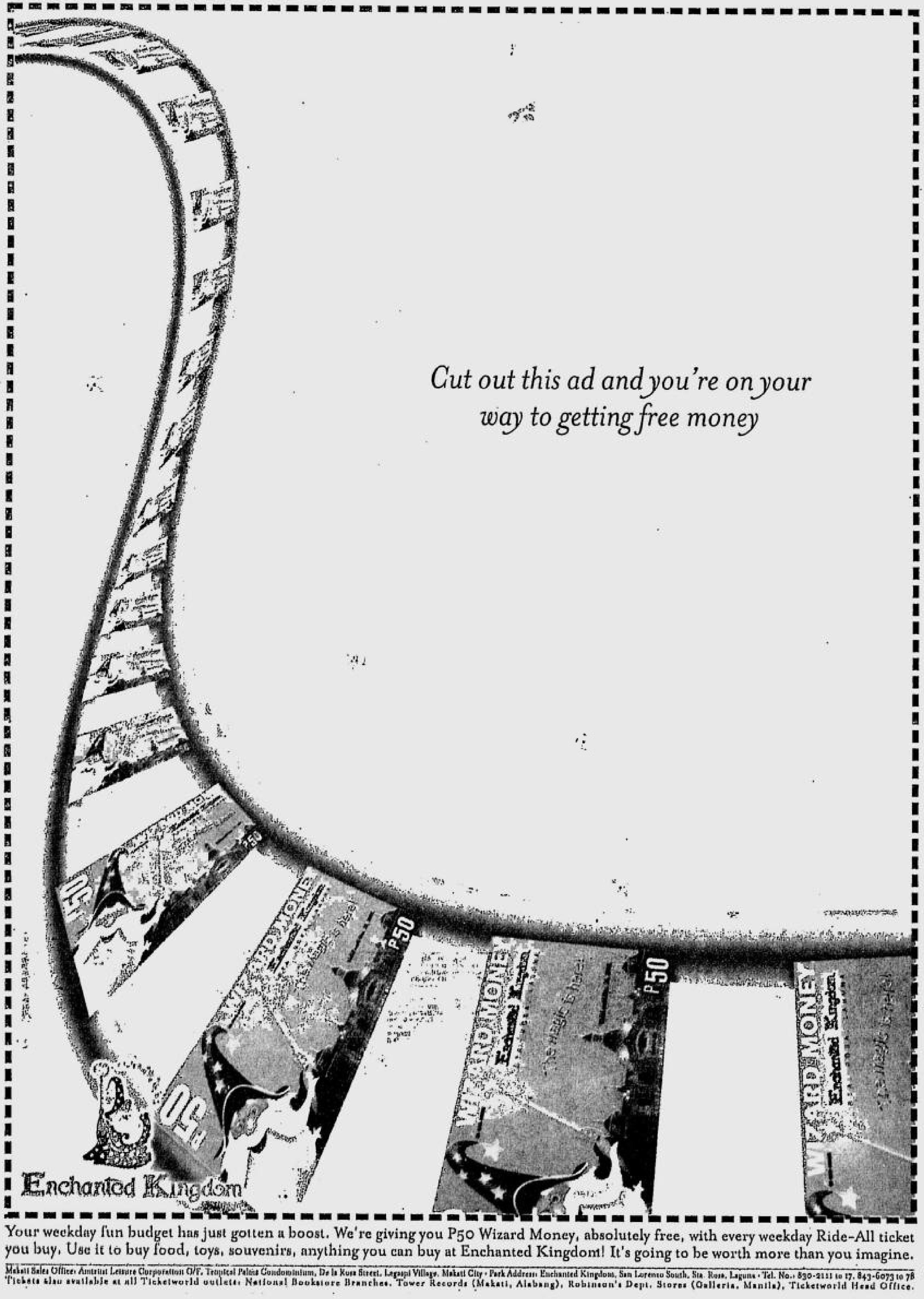
‘Blue Room’ CD

“BLUE Room” is a show on Wave 89.1 every Friday night, 8 to 10 p.m., hosted by **DJ Antidote**.

But the station recently released an album titled “Blue Room,” which contains rare selections that can only be heard on Wave 89.1.

“Blue Room” includes such cuts as “What’s All This About” by **Linda Lewis**, “Could You Be” by **Matt Bianco**, “Beauty of You” by **Camille Hinds**, “Time Out for Love” by **Lou Pardini**, “Time After Time” and “Wave” by **Beleza**, “Ordinary Man” by Doobie Brothers.”

Brazilian Love Affair contributes two cuts—“Fruta Melao” and “Aguas de Marco”—while **Patricia Marx** also has two tracks (“Sei Que Nao Vai” or “Never Can Say Goodbye” and “What’s Going On”).



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Tickets also available at all Ticketworld outlets: National Bookstore Branches, Tower Records (Makati, Alabang), Robinson’s Dept. Stores (Galleria, Manila), Ticketworld Head Office.

More dynamic and humorous sitcom scripting, please

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

AFTER more than two weeks abroad, we rushed home last Saturday and caught two new or restructured sitcoms on Channel 2—"Mary d Potter" with **Maricel Soriano**, and "Ang Pilya at ang Pilot" with **Joyce Jimenez** and **Aga Muhlach**.

We wanted to have a good time while watching the shows, but their uneventful scripting made it difficult for us to get into the spirit of things.

This was a disappointment, considering that these were the sitcoms' first telecasts. They should have been particularly interesting and funny, to give the new shows a good start.

But the storylines were nothing special. In "Mary D Potter," the big to-do was over Mary's accidentally breaking a very expensive antique jar, and how she tried to cover up for her expensive mistake.

In "Ang Pilya at ang Pilot," Aga's new charter plane business got off to a bad start when a gorilla was freed from its crate. This did make for more eventful comedy than the first sitcom's weak and thin plotline, but the gorilla story involved only Aga, while Joyce had to make-do with phlegmatic "comic" verbal exchanges with her friends at the gym.

Aga did work hard to raise the entertainment level of his new show's first episode, but a funny and imaginative script would definitely have made his sitcom a more diverting show.

As for Joyce, she should ask for greater exposure and participation in future episodes of her sitcom with Aga. Just being cute, pert and buxom isn't enough for her to really make her mark as a TV star.

For her part, Maricel Soriano also worked hard on her new sitcom, but to little avail, because the pilot episode's story was nothing special. As a result, her effort to energize the sitcom showed, and she sounded strident and acted in too frenetic a manner.

Truly, a good, eventful and entertaining script is essential to the success of a comedy show, so it's perplexing to see local sitcoms give their scripting component such short shrift. Apparently, the people behind some of these shows feel that, if their resident comedians clown up a storm, they can cover up for their shows' scripting limitations.

As the episodes last Saturday indicated. This is definitely not true. So we trust that imaginative, well-plotted and really funny scripts will become these and other local sitcoms' priorities in the coming weeks.

We did see, however, that the new sitcoms tried to be different by presenting supporting characters or villains who were written and acted as more than just the usual stereotypes, and that's a welcome development.

The best example of this is the conniving couple played by **Herbert Bautista** and **Izza Ignacio** in Maricel's show. Their sassily kooky performances enliven the sitcom because they are not the usual loud and livid villains, and do more than just give the lead player problems.

Funny in their own right, they could conceivably be spun off as the leads of another, sitcom in the future, if they become popular enough with the viewing public.

On the other hand, some supporting actors are no longer fresh and interesting on the TV screen. They've been playing pretty much the same roles in other sitcoms for years, if not for decades, and have consequently run out of ideas or new ways of doing things.

They should be given a much-needed vacation from the tube, so that they can take stock of their comic careers. At the moment, little of what they do is genuinely funny; it's mostly just shouting and gesticulating and performing in a frenetic manner.

They're so experienced at this that they can practically do it in their sleep. Sadly, however, it's their viewers who are dozing off . . .

Lani Misalucha to perform at CCP

SHOWS

AFTER her blockbuster solo concert at the Araneta Coliseum, Asia's Nightingale Lani Misalucha moves on to the CCP Main Theater with a two-night concert, "Lani Misalucha: Asia's Nightingale Sings at the CCP," Oct. 30 and 31, with the 40-piece Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra and the Madrigal Singers.

Also joining the show are tenor Ramon Acoymo of the UP College of Music, flutist Antonio Maigue and the original pop diva herself, Kuh Ledesma.

Musical director and conductor for the show is Gerard Salonga, with Leo Rialp as stage director and Noel Ferrer and Ida Henares as scriptwriters.

Tickets are priced at P5,000 (parterre boxes), P2,500 (orchestra), P2000 (lower box), P1,500 (balcony 1), P1,000 (upper box) and P500 (balcony 2).

Tickets are sold at all Ticketworld outlets (891-5610), Primeline office (897-6170 or 897-6172 to 73) and at the CCP Box Office (832-3706 or 832-1125 loc. 1403 or 1404).

For ticket inquiries, call Manolet Garcia at 0917-241-7907 or 0919-654-3586.

BABY BOOMERS SING FOR A CAUSE

In a gesture of solidarity, Baby Boomer singers band together to show they care for the environment. Artist (from left) Audie Gemora, Jamie Rivera, Isay Alvarez, Pinky Amador, Bimbo Cerrudo and Robert Seña will perform in a concert, "Retro @ Rockwell," 7:30 p.m. tomorrow, Oct. 4 at Rockwell Club Courts. They will sing to encourage everyone to plant trees at the La Mesa Watershed. The singers gave their nod to ABS-CBN Foundation managing director Gina Lopez, who approached them to help raise funds to reforest the nearly denuded La Mesa Watershed. Other performers in the show are the Apo Hiking Society trio of Jim Paredes, Buboy Garrovillo and Danny Javier, Joannie Feliciano, Jeanne Young, Chat Silayan, Richard Merck, Jose Mari Chan, Mitch Valdez, Laura Danao, Ed Finlan, Jacqui Magno, Laura Danao, Christopher de Leon, Tirso Cruz III, Ricky Danao, Michael de Mesa, Pinky de Leon, Ronnie Henares and Jojit Paredes. For tickets, call 415-2227.

ALBUM LAUNCH

Tribe of Levi will launch its debut album under Neo Records at 9 p.m. on Oct. 5 at Hard Rock Café in Makati. The group is composed of lead vocalist Zaq Salazar, rapper Robbie Rapsmith, musical director and guitarist Emerson Texon, drummer Mark Anthony Ayangco, bassist Ramil Servales, keyboardist Edward Mitra and wind instrument specialist Lauren C. It is managed by renowned stage and live events director Roxanne Lapus of First Name Entertainment and Management Inc. Tribe of Levi performs a wide range of musical styles, from infectious R&B to heart-tugging love songs, rap, hip-hop, funk, soul and pop.

FIVE GOES ON THIRD ALBUM

Sean Conlon, Scott Robinson, Ritchie Neville, Richard "Abs" Breen and Jason "J" Brown of the hugely successful boy band Five, come up with a third album, "King Size," released locally by BMG Records Pilipinas. From the garage/dance feel of the first single "Let's Dance," to the most complete Five ballad to date "Closer To Me" and the rock-tinged "Lay All Your Loving On Me," Five's third outing is certainly bigger and bolder servings than past efforts. The group's last two albums, "Five" and "Invincible," easily turned multi-platinum in the UK. An ongoing intensive radio promotional activities for "King Size" is sponsored by Beverly Hills and Company.

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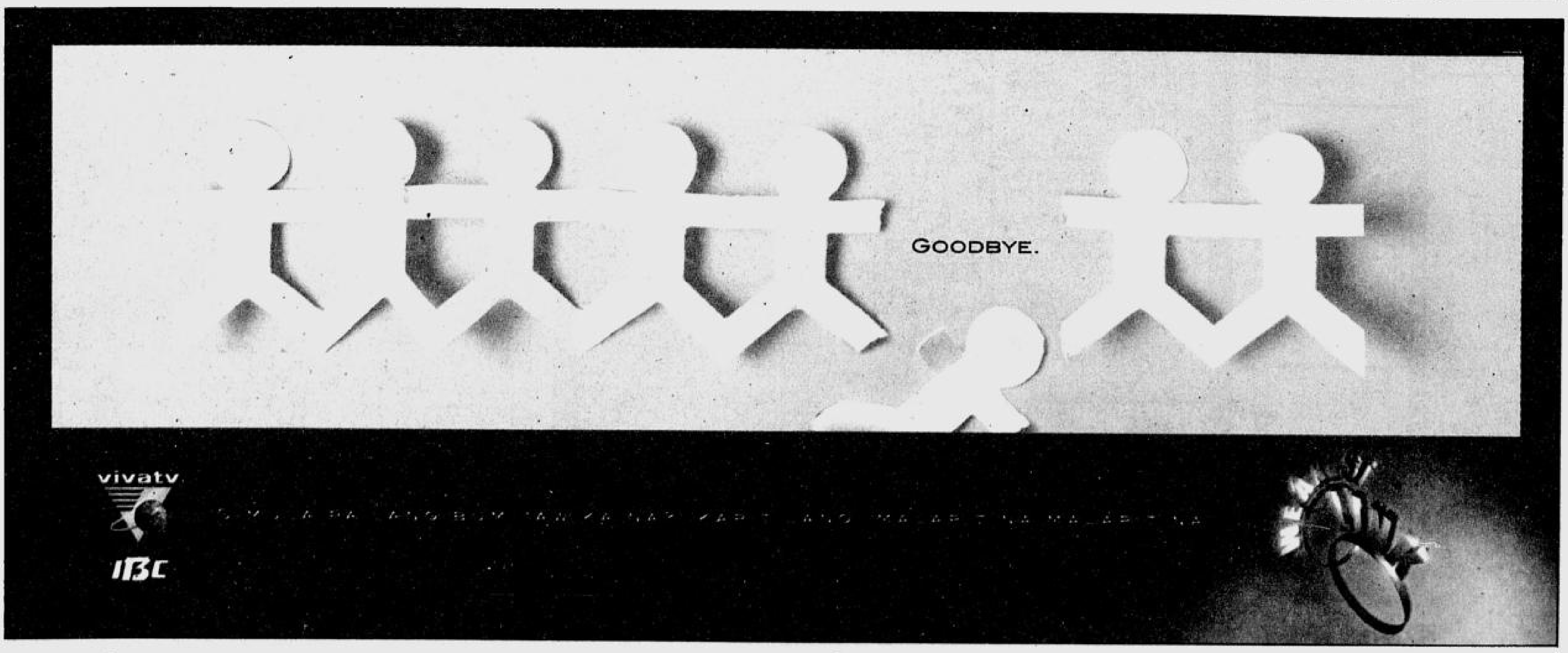

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6 (DTS)	SISID
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Masagana CINEMA (Pasay) tel 831.6603

1	LA VIDA ROSA
2	SISID
3	BASAGAN NG MUKHA

starmall Movies (Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	LA VIDA ROSA
2	SISID
3	MR. NICE GUY
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
5	BASAGAN NG MUKHA

METROPOLIS star (Alabang) tel 543.4001

1	SISID
2	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
3	MR. NICE GUY
4	LA VIDA ROSA
5	FAST & FURIOUS
6	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
7	RESERVE
8	RESERVE

PREMIERE CINEMA THX (Makati City) tel 751.2011 to13

1	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS

Center Plaza Cinema (Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	A.I.
2	MANO MANO 2

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC. tel 930.9515

1	SISID
2	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
3	MR. NICE GUY

Spring (Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	SISID
A	BASAGAN NG MUKHA

Sunshine (FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
2	SISID
3	MR. NICE GUY
4	RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA

City (Manila) tel 734.8568

1 (DOLBY)	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4	SISID
5	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
6	LA VIDA ROSA
7 (DTS)	FAST & FURIOUS
8 (SDDS)	ST. FRANCIS VILLE
9 (DOLBY)	PRINCESS DIARIES

Caloocan tel 362.3508

2	SISID

Grand Central (Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	LA VIDA ROSA
2	SISID
3	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
4 (SDDS)	FAST & FURIOUS
5	BANYO QUEEN
6 (DOLBY)	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
7 (DTS)	ST. FRANCIS VILLE
8	RESERVE
9	RESERVE

Commonwealth tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	ST. FRANCIS VILLE
2	SISID
3	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
4	ST. FRANCIS VILLE
5 (SDDS)	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
6	LA VIDA ROSA
7 (DOLBY)	FAST & FURIOUS
8	RESERVE

Ortigas tel 656.6795

1	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
2	SISID
3 (DTS)	RESERVE
4	LA VIDA ROSA
5 (SDDS)	BASAGAN NG MUKHA

Universal (Manila) tel 733.2470

1	SISID

Sampaguita (Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	SISID

Dilson (Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	ONE NIGHT AT MC COOLS.
Lords	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
Jennet	

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
2	SISID
3	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS

Prima (Pasig) tel 641.1215

3	SISID

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
2	SISID
3	MR. NICE GUY
4	LA VIDA ROSA
5	BASAGAN NG MUKHA

New Divisoria Mall DIVISORIA CINEMA tel 244.4619

1	SISID
2	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
3	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6	MR. NICE GUY

Baclaran LRT LRT CINEMA tel 512.0115

1 (DOLBY)	SISID
2	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
3	RESERVE

Berma tel 879.2029

1	SISID
2	BASAGAN NG MUKHA

CitiMall (Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4	RESERVE

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall (Sta. Rosa Laguna) tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	SISID
2	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
3 (DTS)	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
2 (DTS)	SISID
3 (DOLBY)	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
4	HEART BREAKER

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall (Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	SISID
2 (DOLBY)	HEART BREAKER
3 (DTS)	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
4	BASAGAN NG MUKHA

Cinemagix (Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	SCREAM 2
2	BANYO QUEEN
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Lianas Cinema (Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	SISID
2	LA VIDA ROSA
3	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
4 (DTS)	MR. NICE GUY

Lianas MovieCity (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
2	SISID
3 (DTS)	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
4	LA VIDA ROSA
5	HEART BREAKER

Olivarez Tri-Cinema (Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
2	SISID
3	BASAGAN NG MUKHA

Olivarez Los Baños tel (049) 536.5101

1	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
2	SISID
3	BASAGAN NG MUKHA

Olivarez Tagaytay tel (046) 413.0311

1	ORIGINAL SIN
2	LA VIDA ROSA
3	

Morales Cinema (Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	HEART BREAKER
2	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
3	

Cabuyao (Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
2 (DTS)	RESERVE

Fourstep (Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	BASAGAN NG MUKHA

Emperor (Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	RUSH HOUR 2
2	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
3	LA VIDA ROSA

Fiesta World Mall (Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	CRAZY BEAUTIFUL
2	ENEMY AT THE GATES
3	LA VIDA ROSA
4	SCARY MOVIE 2

Jade Cinema (Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	PRINCESS DIARIES
2	HEART BREAKER
3	RUSH HOUR 2
4 (DTS ES)	FAST & FURIOUS

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5	SISID
6	ST. FRANCIS VILLE
7	ORIGINAL SIN
8	LA VIDA ROSA
9	ENEMY AT THE GATES
10	PRINCESS DIARIES

ERMITA 536-7809 TO 12

1	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
2	FAST & FURIOUS
3	SISID
4	ST. FRANCIS VILLE
5	LA VIDA ROSA
6	ORIGINAL SIN
7	PRINCESS DIARIES

NOVALICHES 935-3229 TO 31

1	RESERVE
2	FAST & FURIOUS
3	SISID
4	FAST & FURIOUS
5	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
6	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
7	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
8	PRINCESS DIARIES

IMUS (046) 471-8188

1	FAST & FURIOUS
2	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
3	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
4	PRINCESS DIARIES
5	LA VIDA ROSA
6	SISID

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453

1	CROCODILE 2
2	LA VIDA ROSA
3	A KNIGHT'S TALE
4	RUSH HOUR 2
5	ENEMY AT THE GATES
6	MANO MANO 2

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THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	LA VIDA ROSA
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	LA VIDA ROSA
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	PRINCESS DIARIES
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	FAST & FURIOUS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	ORIGINAL SIN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	HEART BREAKERS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	BANYO QUEEN
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	CROCODILE 2
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	ORIGINAL SIN
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	TAILS OF EROTICA / NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT
ODEON	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
ODEON-2	MR. NICE GUY
ROBEN	SISID
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	SWORDFISH / FINAL FANTASY
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	SISID
REMAR	SISID
REMAR-2	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	BASAGAN NG MUKHA
B	SISID
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	FAST & FURIOUS
CINEMA-2	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BAKIT DI TOTOHANIN
CINEMA-2	MANO MANO 2
CINEMA-3	PUKYUTAN
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	RUSH HOUR 2
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	PRINCESS DIARIES
CINEMA-6	A.I.
CINEMA-7	BURLESK QUEEN
CINEMA-8	BUKAS BABAHA NG DUGO
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	PRINCESS DIARIES
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	ENEMY AT THE GATES
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	A KNIGHT'S TALE
CINEMA-12	SCARY MOVIE 2
CINEMA-14	ORIGINAL SIN
CINEMA-15	BANYO QUEEN
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	THE FAST & THE FURIOUS
CINEMA-2	PRINCESS DIARIES
CINEMA-3	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
CINEMA-4	HEART BREAKERS
CINEMA-5	ORIGINAL SIN
CINEMA-6	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	RESERVE
CINEMA-2	RESERVE
CINEMA-4	RESERVE
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	

NBC-FM bares lineup of events

NATION Broadcasting Corporation or NBC remains at the forefront or radio fun with its unique audience, specific approach to programming and special events.

While NBC's flagship station, Joey@Rhythms 92.3 continues to blow the mind of Metro Manila, the sister stations are equally busy brightening things up in their respective locales.

In the next few months, get set to celebrate Octoberfest with a special dance party with Jesse@Rhythms 102.3 Baguio, and a big time bar tour with Charlie@Rhythms 101.9 Cebu.

The yearly Masskara Festival gets even merrier with theme parties with Jamie@Rhythms 102.3 Bacolod.

Tony@Rhythms 101.1 Zamboanga takes center stage with a ballroom event to mark Fiesta Pilar.

And once the holidays set in, the entire NBC-FM family gets in on the act with a special Christmas Countdown for the whole month of December.

After the fireworks go off to usher in the New Year, Charlie@Rhythms 101.9 Cebu celebrates the Sinulog Festival with raffles, open bars and hot Latin bands.

The festivities continue with Kalilangan Festival from Anna@Rhythms 97.5 in General Santos and Panagbenga Flower parties from Jesse@Rhythms 102.3 in Baguio.

Graduates can enjoy a three-night bash with Charlie@Rhythms 101.9 Cebu, Rocky@Rhythms 98.3 Iligan, Jamie@Rhythms 102.3 Bacolod, Danni@Rhythms 101.9 Davao, Sandy@Rhythms 101.5 Cagayan de Oro and Jesse@Rhythms 102.3 Baguio.

The fun continues all summer long with events like the NBC-FM family's nationwide Easter Egg Hunt party, 101 Fresh Ways to Party with Charlie@Rhythms 101.9 Cebu and Danni@Rhythms 101.9 Davao.

There are also four nights of cool, unplugged grooves with Acoustic Nights from Charlie@Rhythms 101.9 Cebu.

Debut album

SINGING newcomer Rea Valle comes out with her debut album, "O Kay Sarap Umibig," under Prime Music.

Album producer is Boy Christopher, who is also the guy behind the success of the "Rated S" album of Selina Sevilla and Willy Garte's "Bawal na Gamot."

Christopher discovered Rea during an out-of-town show in Tanauan, Batangas, where she wowed the audience with her own kind of performance. He immediately offered to handle Rea's career and went on to write, compose and produce her debut album.

Rea started singing at six. When she was 12, she became a member of German Moreno's youth-oriented TV program "That's Entertainment," with Ara Mina and Assunta de Rossi.

Rea's album contains her first single "Sinungaling" and other cuts like "Ibibigay Lahat," "Nananabik," "Bakit," "Sabihin Mo," "O Kay Sarap (Umibig)," "Sadyang Pag-ibig Na," "Walang Kupas," "I Love You" and the current hit, "Giniginaw."

ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

New thriller by Michael Douglas is top box-office earner in US

LOS ANGELES—"Don't Say a Word," a new thriller starring Michael Douglas, appears to be having the last word at the box office, taking $18 million in its first weekend, provisional figures showed on Sunday.

The figure reflects the US and Canadian takings of the film, which is about a well-known teenage psychiatrist and her relationship with one of her patients, a violent young woman with an angelic appearance, Los Angeles-based Exhibitor Relations said.

In second place was the comedy "Zoolander," directed by actor Ben Stiller, about a ditsy supermodel who falls prey to a dangerous criminal gang, which provisionally took $15.7 million between Friday and Monday.

The screen adaptation of the Stephen King story "Hearts in Atlantis," starring Anton Yelchin and veteran star Anthony Hopkins, came in third place with estimated takings of $9.5 million.

The baseball movie "Hardball," starring Keanu Reaves, was displaced from top spot in the box office rankings after two consecutive weeks in the lead and came in fourth this week, taking $5.2 million.

Horror flick "The Others," directed by Spaniard Alejandro Amenabar and starring Nicole Kidman, took in an estimated $5.1 million to earn it fifth place. *AFP*

Sharon Stone hospitalized

SAN FRANCISCO, California—Sharon Stone was under observation at a hospital on Monday after suffering what appears to have been a brain aneurysm.

The 43-year-old actress was hospitalized Saturday for bleeding on the brain, according to her publicist, Cindi Berger.

Stone's husband, San Francisco Chronicle executive editor Phil Bronstein, took her to a hospital emergency room because she was suffering severe head pain.

An angiogram showed the likely cause was a tiny aneurysm that required no treatment.

Berger said Stone, who was resting comfortably, probably will remain hospitalized the rest of the week.

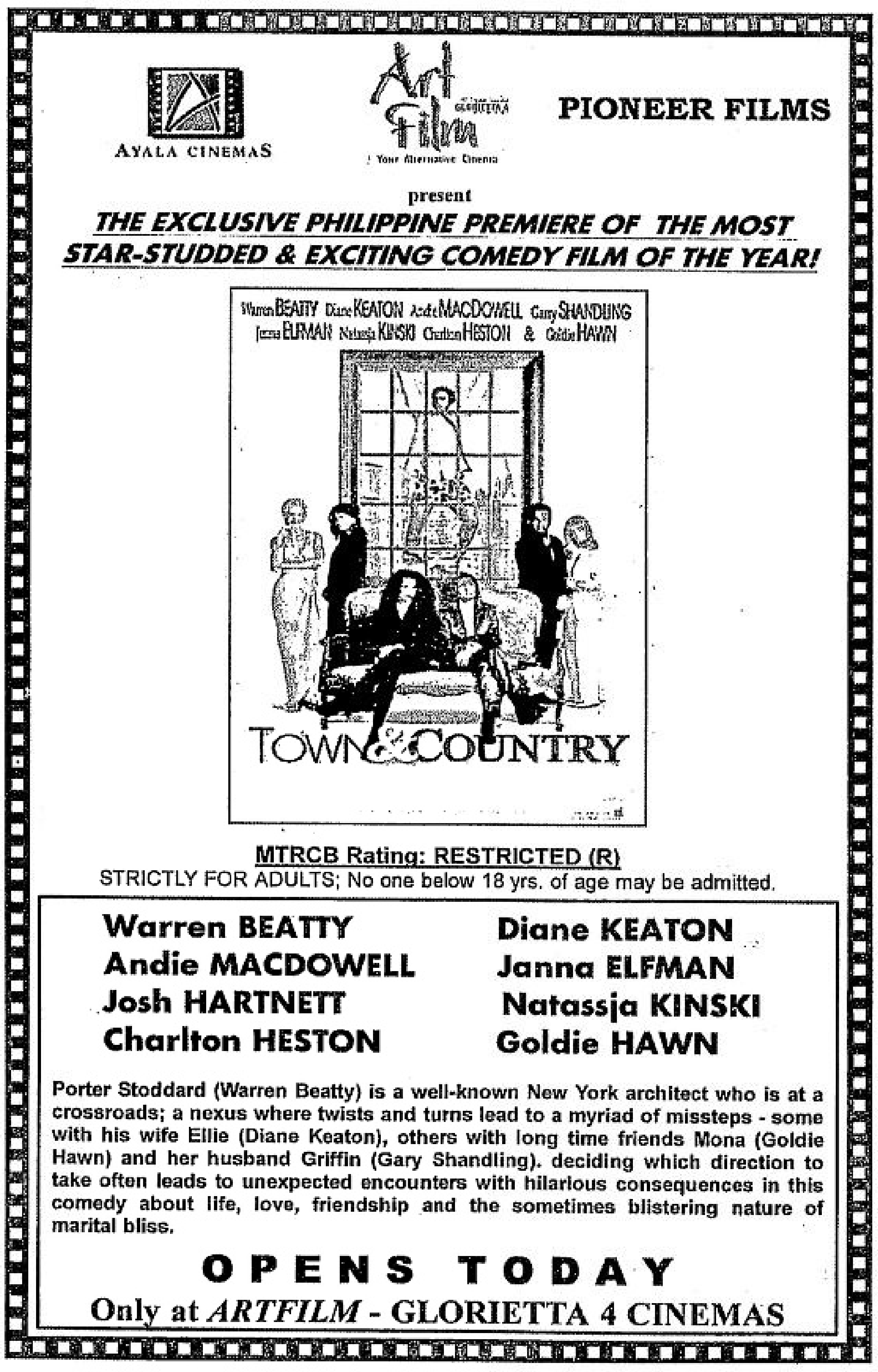
"I spoke to her and she sounded great," Berger said.

STONE

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

FAST & FURIOUS - R 18 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00	PRINCESS DIARIES - GP 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS - P 13 12:10, 2:25, 4:40, 6:55, 9:10
HEARTBREAKERS - P 13 11:45, 2:15, 4:45, 7:15, 9:45	ORIGINAL SIN - R 18 11:15, 1:45, 4:15, 6:45, 9:20	AMERICA'S SWEETHEARTS - P 13 11:00, 1:10, 3:25, 5:40, 7:55, 10:10

Matinee, P80, Mon.-Fri.,11:00 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.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Warren BEATTY
Andie MACDOWELL
Josh HARTNETT
Charlton HESTON
Diane KEATON
Janna ELFMAN
Natassja KINSKI
Goldie HAWN

Porter Stoddard (Warren Beatty) is a well-known New York architect who is at a crossroads; a nexus where twists and turns lead to a myriad of missteps - some with his wife Ellie (Diane Keaton), others with long time friends Mona (Goldie Hawn) and her husband Griffin (Gary Shandling). deciding which direction to take often leads to unexpected encounters with hilarious consequences in this comedy about life, love, friendship and the sometimes blistering nature of marital bliss.

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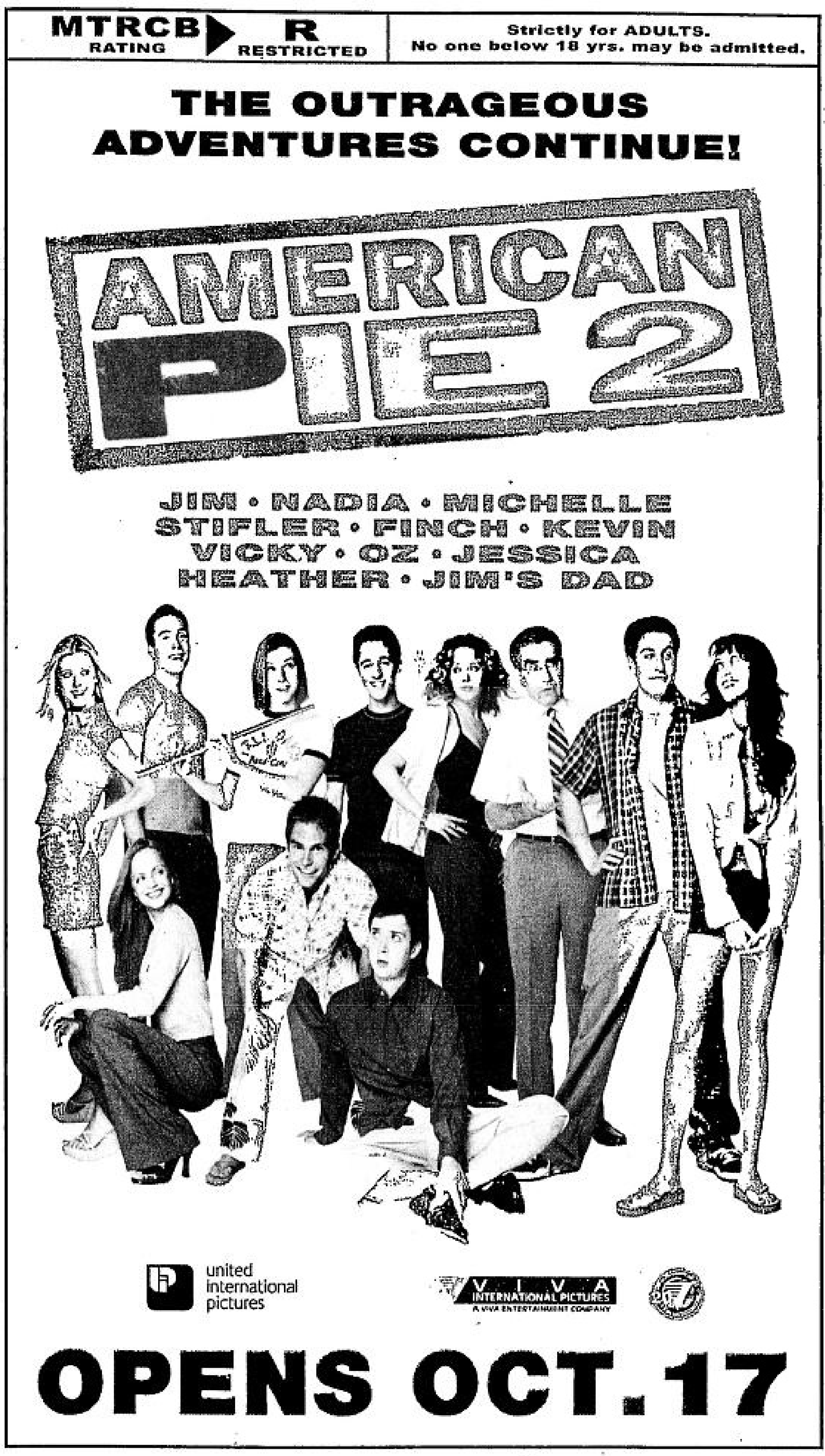
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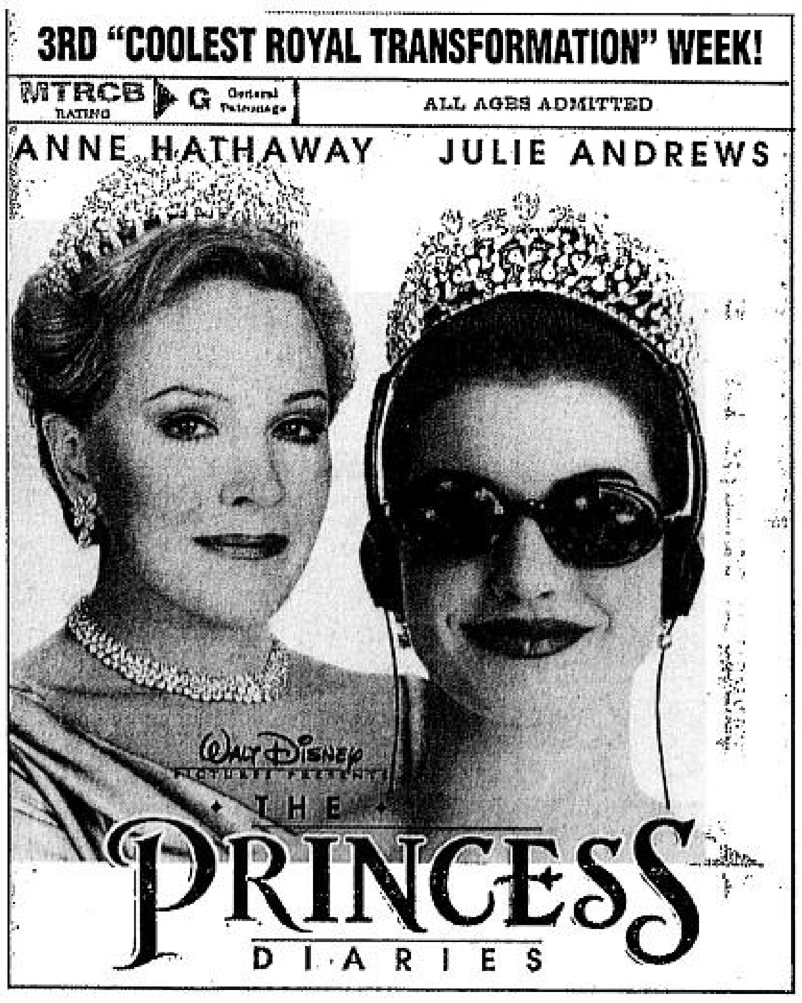
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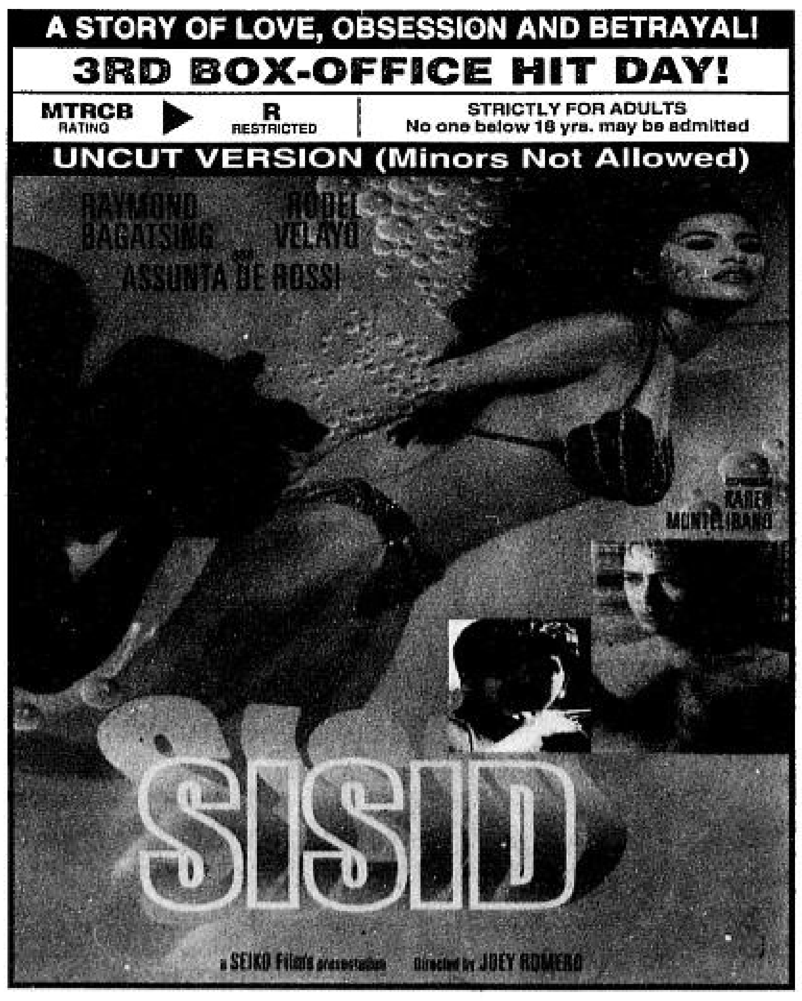
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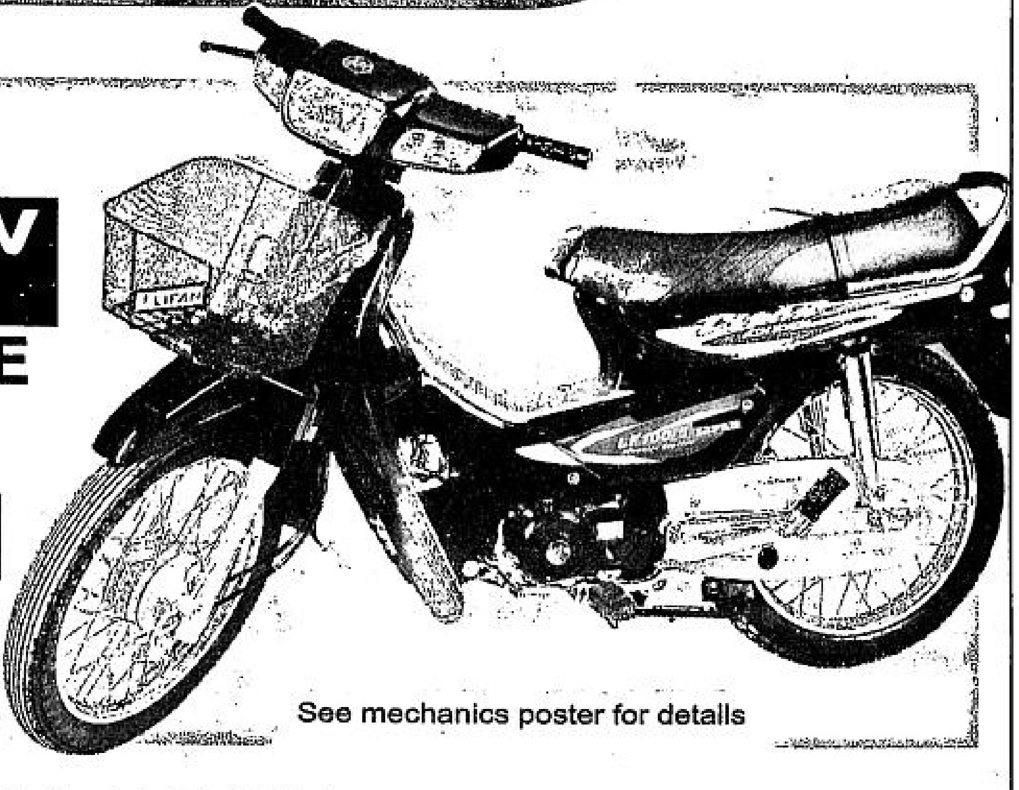

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BUSINESS

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor CORRIE S. NARISMA, Assistant Editorr

Banks told to prepare contingency plans

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas directed local banks to come up with comprehensive business "continuity" plans should war break out between the United States and Afghanistan's Taliban government and disrupt the local banking sector's operations.

In a circular dated Sept. 28, the BSP gave the banks 30days to submit their plans.

The circular, signed by BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura, stressed that the business plan should provide measures that would ensure that disruptions in bank operations and the financial losses arising from lost business opportunities or asset deterioration would be minimized.

"It should also ensure the timely resumption to normal operations in case of disruptions," it added.

The BSP said the senior management of each bank would be responsible in ensuring that the business plan was adequately tested, validated and periodically reviewed.

The BSP assured the banks that each business plan would be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Buenaventura said the BSP was taking the lead toward this direction by setting up back-up files of all its important documents in a separate location within the BSP complex in Manila.

He said the BSP had also established a backup headquarter in another region in the country. The BSP chief did not disclose the exact location of the facility for security reasons.

The BSP maintains critical files of bank reports, findings of its supervision and examination department, and records of transactions in the foreign exchange market.

Buenaventura said these measures aimed to ensure that the central bank would be able to continue normal operations even if war erupts between the US and the Taliban government.

The Abu Sayyaf group that operates in the South was named as one of the terrorist groups that might have links to Osama bin Laden, the main suspect behind the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States.

On the financial side, Buenaventura said the BSP had opened a liquidity facility days after the Sept. 11 attacks to ensure liquidity in case of heavy withdrawals.

The BSP official, however, said local banks appeared to be coping well as not a single lender had indicated any intent to avail itself of emergency liquidity from the central bank.

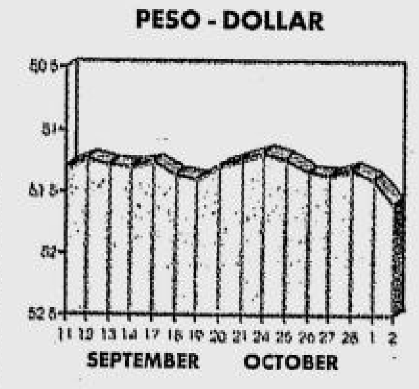
Banks may avail themselves of quick cash equivalent to as much as 50 percent of their deposit base. As of the second quarter, the commercial banking system has a total deposit base of P1.68 trillion.

The BSP's emergency assistance window was similar to that made available at the height of the Y2K scare in late 1999 to early 2000.

The central bank also opened a similar facility late last year during the "Juetengate" scandal when some banks associated with former President Joseph Estrada had suffered from heavy withdrawals.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



GRAPHS BY RONNIE CABUANG

Peso-Dollar Rate

P51.60 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
Oct. 02, 2001

¥120.02 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
Oct. 02, 2001

GOLD:$290.50/291.50
per ounce Hong Kong,
Sept. 28, 2001

Oct. 2, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency In Peso
United States	Dollar	1.090037	1.000000	51.3710
Japan	Yen	0.009066	0.008317	0.4273
United Kingdom	Pound	1.613146	1.479900	76.0239
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.139781	0.128235	6.5876
Switzerland	Franc	0.674194	0.618506	31.7733
Canada	Dollar	0.692615	0.635405	32.6414
Singapore	Dollar	0.616258	0.565355	29.0429
Australia	Dollar	0.536092	0.491811	25.2648
Bahrain	Dinar	2.891499	2.652661	136.2698
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.290685	0.266674	13.6993
Brunei	Dollar	0.615840	0.564972	29.0232
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000111	0.000102	0.0052
Thailand	Baht	0.024490	0.022467	1.1542
UAE	Dirham	0.296851	0.272331	13.9899
Korea	Won	0.000839	0.000770	0.0396
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.917400	47.1278
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.469059	24.0960
France	Franc	0.152450	0.139857	7.1846
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.416298	21.3856
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.066670	3.4249
Belgium	Franc	0.024790	0.022742	1.1683
Italy	Lire	0.000517	0.000474	0.0243
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.154296	7.9263
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004576	0.2351
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005514	0.2833
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024790	0.022742	1.1683
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.164858	59.8399

STOCK MARKET

Stocks hit new 3-yr. low

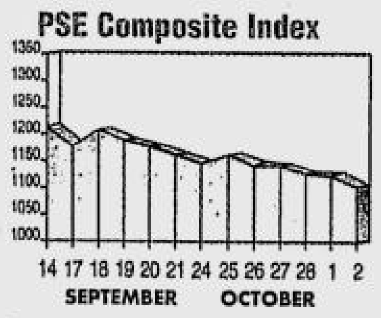
SHARES yesterday fell 1.8 percent as investors stayed away from the market on continued uncertainty over the looming US strike on terrorists, analysts said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index fell 20.05 points to 1,105.01.

It was the lowest level since the index closed at 1,100.76 on Sept. 14, 1998.

"Everybody is taking a wait-and-see attitude with regard to what the US will do with regard to Afghanistan," said Leo Venezuela of Unicapital Securities Inc.

Volume turnover rose to 236 million shares while value fell to P130 million from 216.9 million shares worth P226.61 million the previous day. *AFP*



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Merrill completes sale of RP unit

INVESTMENT bank Merrill Lynch yesterday said it had completed the sale of its Philippine brokerage operation, making the US concern the latest in a string of foreign brokerages to exit the market.

Merrill will use the renamed Philippine Equity Partners as its exclusive broker for trading on the Philippine Stock Exchange. The unit will continue to research and deal in Philippine securities, the statement said.

The brokerage was bought by its Philippine management team, the statement said. It did not disclose the value of the sale.

Six foreign brokerages have suspended their operations in the Philippines this year: Citicorp International Securities, BNP Paribas, Securities 2000, Nomura Securities, Orion Squire Capital and OCBC Securities.

Philippine stocks have been suffering from poor liquidity and lack of foreign interest for months. *Reuters*

Smart's 1st GSM switch in N. Luzon

SMART Communications Inc. yesterday announced the activation of its first GSM (global system for mobile communications) switch in Northern Luzon. This forms part of the company's P21-billion network expansion program for this year.

The new facility, located at the PLDT compound in San Fernando, La Union, has a capacity to accommodate 350,000 subscribers.

The switch will initially serve the provinces of La Union, Cagayan, Isabela, Quirino, Nueva Vizcaya, Ifugao and Baguio. By yearend, the traffic from Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte and Benguet will also be processed by the new switch.

"The full operation of Smart's (La Union) GSM switch will assist efforts of the regional government to build up the North Luzon Growth Quadrangle," Smart's president and chief executive Napoleon Nazareno said.

The North Luzon Growth Quadrangle includes the 15 provinces in the Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley and the Cordillera Administrative Region.

Smart has been investing in additional telecommunications infrastructure in the area to support regional initiatives. It recently signed a lease with the John Hay Poro Point Development Corp. for the installation of a cell site in the former Wallace Air Force Base which is now being developed as a special economic and freeport zone.

Gov't to cut growth targets

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

IN VIEW of the expected 15-percent contraction in export receipts this year, the government is considering scaling down its economic targets by at least half-a-percentage point.

A memorandum from one of the members of the inter-agency Development Budget Coordinating Council showed a recommendation to pare the country's economic growth targets by 0.5 percent from the low-end goals of 3.3 percent for GDP and 3.8 percent for GDP. This would bring the new growth targets to 2.8 percent for GDP and 3.3 percent for GNP.

The recommendation was made after the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas announced that exports might contract by 15 percent this year.

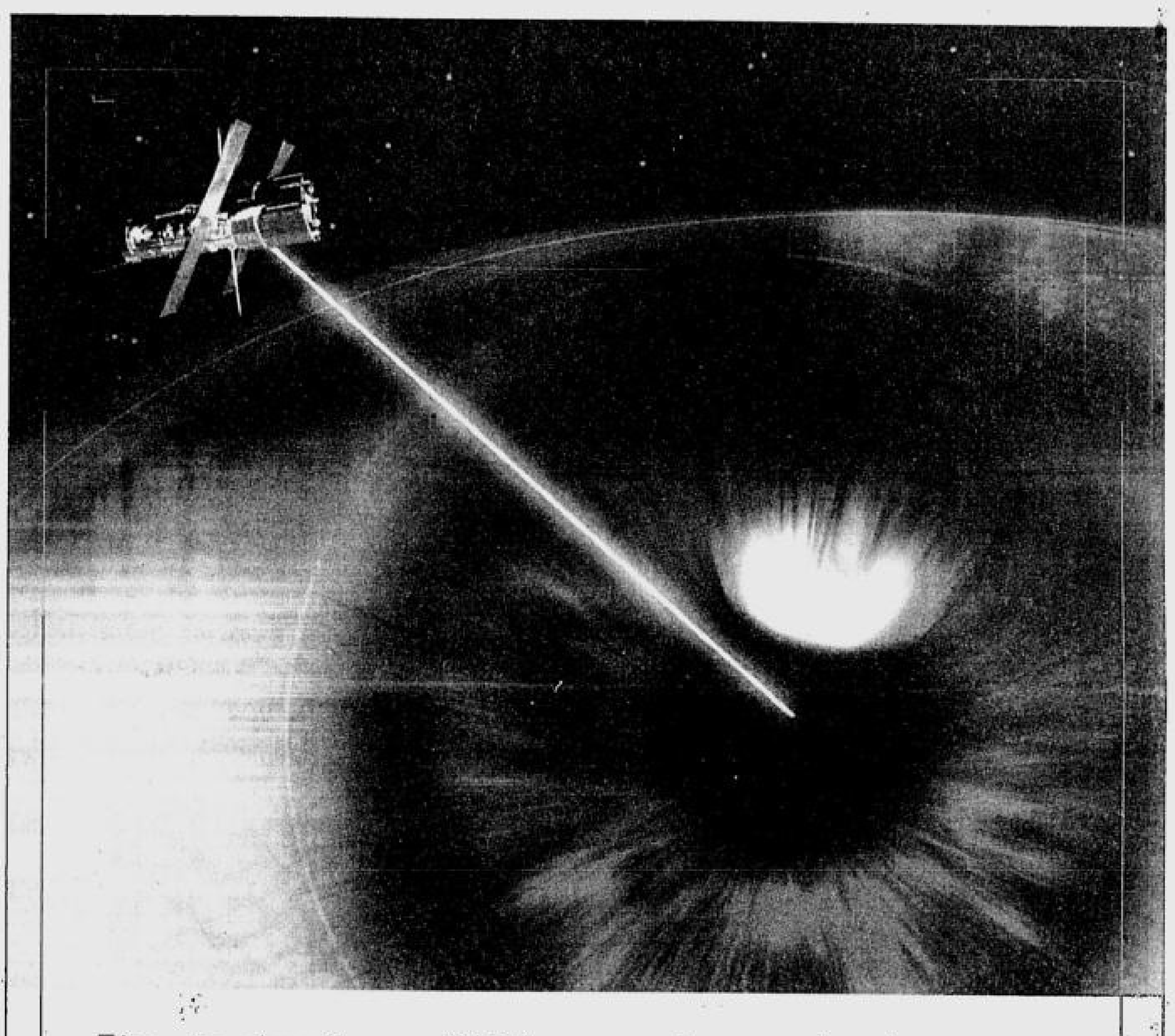
A DBCC member said the team would take a closer look at the available data first before making any changes in the country's economic growth targets. As of its meeting last Saturday, the DBCC maintained the economic targets.

The government needs to firm up its numbers soon with the plan of Congress to hold a hearing in order to review the country's macroeconomic targets.

"Unofficially and realistically though, the group believes that the targets really have to be scaled down by 0.5 percent. But that is something we still have to discuss," said a DBCC member.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the government

GOV'T/ B5



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Anti-dirty money law is just the beginning

BY RAUL C. DANCEL
AND ELENA R. TORRIJOS

(Last of three parts)

SPECIAL REPORT

BEYOND the anti-terrorism rhetoric, the Anti-Money Laundering Act of 2001 is really about fixing a "bastardized" financial system.

"The end that we seek is a halt to the bastardization of our financial system. The anti-money laundering law is only the beginning of a series of reforms and actions that will have to be undertaken," the Action for Economic Reforms, a privately run think tank, said in comments about the new law.

Money laundering is an attendant crime to other, usually bigger crimes.

As the name suggests, money laundering is the process of cleaning "dirty" money. The money is dirty in the sense that it comes as proceeds from illegal arms sales, smuggling, drug trafficking, prostitution, embezzlement, insider trading, bribery, computer fraud and other crimes. This is done by either disguising the sources of the earnings, changing their forms, or moving the funds to places where they are less likely to attract attention.

By its very nature, money laundering occurs outside the normal range of economic statistics. But rough estimates have been put forward to give some sense of scale to the problem.

The International Monetary Fund has estimated that the aggregate size of money laundering in the world could be somewhere between 2 and 5 percent of the world's gross domestic product. These percentages indicate that money laundering involves between $590 billion and $1.5 trillion. The lower figure is equivalent to the value of the total output of an economy the size of Spain.

Philippine dimension

In the Philippines, the problem has its own dimensions.

The perception that the Philippines is a haven for money laundering is supported by data. The US treasury department's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network reported that the Philippines ranked second among 15 non-cooperative jurisdictions in terms of the number of suspicious activities relating to financial transactions from April to July 1996. During this period, the total number reports on suspicious activities filed reached 566, second only to Russia, which reported a total of 847.

In a recent speech, Sen. Francis Pangilinan noted that money laundering "has serious and detrimental social consequences."

"Money laundering provides fuel for drug dealers, terrorists, arms dealers and other criminals to operate and expand their criminal enterprises. Left unhampered, money laundering erodes the integrity of our nation's financial institutions," he said.

Former Justice Undersecretary Jose Calida, head of an inter-agency task force that drafted an anti-money laundering bill that President Macapagal-Arroyo sent to Congress, said the Philippines ranked 17th among the top 20 origins of laundered money. Most of the dirty money, he said, came from three sources: illegal drug trade, graft and corruption, and kidnap-for-ransom.

Illegal drug trade

Calida estimates that the illegal drug trade has a "captive" market of about 1.8 million Filipinos, or 2.2 percent of the population. It is estimated to be worth more than P265 billion a year, about 8 percent of the local economy's output and roughly a third of the government's budget this year. The "shabu" market is estimated to be worth P204 billion a year while revenues from marijuana and ecstacy are said to be worth P44 billion and P2.5 billion.

Another source of dirty money being cleaned through the country's financial system is corruption. Transparency International, using its "corruption perceptions index," ranks the Philippines as the 65th least corrupt out of 91 countries. With a maximum possible score of 10—highly clean—and a minimum of zero—highly corrupt—the Philippines got a rating of 2.9.

The Office of the Ombudsman, the agency tasked to run after corrupt government officials, estimates that about P100 million is being lost daily to corruption. The figure is actually closer to about P150 billion a year or P278 million a day. The World Bank places losses due to corruption at 20 percent of the national budget, which means P1 out of every P5 in the government's pockets is being filched by corrupt public servants.

"Based on these data, it would appear that graft and corruption in the country is so pervasive that it is capable of triggering money laundering on a large scale," observes Calida.

Kidnap-for-ransom is also a big source of laundered money.

"Kidnapping has become a flourishing business in the Philippines, giving the country the title 'Asia's kidnap capital'," says Calida.

Kidnapping capital

The Philippines has been included in the top 10 most dangerous nations with respect to kidnapping, along with Colombia, Mexico, Venezuela, Guatemala, Cambodia, Yemen, Nigeria, Angola and Russia.

While there is readily available estimate of the worth of the kidnapping industry in the Philippines, authorities believe that it is a multimillion-peso industry. Kidnap-for-ransom gangs prey mostly on wealthy Chinese-Filipino families and foreigners. The most notorious among these groups is the Abu Sayyaf. Former Armed Forces Chief of Staff Angelo Reyes has admitted that the Abu Sayyaf was able to extract P245 million in "board and lodging" fees paid by foreign governments for the release of eight hostages last year. Libya also contributed some $25 million in "development aid" for the release of these hostages, while the German magazine Der Spiegel reportedly paid about $5.5 million for the release of one of its journalists. These discount figures are cited in testimonies that are currently being given by former undercover agent Mary "Rosebud" Ong to the Senate.

Apart from the illegal drug trade, corruption and kidnapping, "dirty money" is also coming from white-collar crimes, like scams involving securities.

The Securities and Exchange Commission has been running after so-called boiler room operators—groups involved in the illegal sale of securities. The commission has been asking the central bank to freeze accounts being used by these syndicates, which operate in first-class buildings in Makati and Ortigas, but such a move has been prevented by the country's bank secrecy law.

Based on SEC intelligence, the funds being remitted to the groups amount to about $5 million a day.

There are also "dirty money" coming from stock price manipulation and insider trading or other securities law violations.

Plunder trial

Perhaps, nothing illustrates the scale of the problem more than the ongoing trial for plunder of former President Joseph Estrada.

In testimonies given to the Senate last year, key witnesses provided details on how Estrada allegedly amassed and "legitimized" using the financial system some P4 billion in payoffs from operators of the "jueteng" illegal numbers game, kickbacks from tobacco excise taxes and questionable government investments during 31 months in office.

A Land Bank of the Philippines branch manager testified before the Senate that three persons in their 20s received P130 million out of Ilocos Sur's share of the excise tax on tobacco in 1998. The money, according to Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, was meant for Estrada, who ordered P200 million in tobacco tax released to the province in exchange for the kickback.

Lolita Almazan, manager of the Landbank branch on Shaw Boulevard in Mandaluyong, said Eleuterio Tan, Alma Alfaro and Delia Rajas, three alleged associates of Estrada's friend, Charlie "Atong" Ang, opened separate savings accounts with the branch on the same day that Landbank's Vigan branch transferred P130 million.

Almazan said P40 million was transferred to Tan's account, another P40 million to Alfaro's account and P50 million to Rajas' account. That same day, the three withdrew the money from their accounts and purchased separate manager's checks, Almazan said.

These transactions would never have happened had an anti-money laundering law been in place at that time. Transferring huge amounts of money by persons who were just in their 20s would have triggered alarms.

In yet another case of money laundering, an official of Equitable PCI Bank Inc. disclosed that Yolanda Ricaforte, the alleged auditor for the "jueteng" payoffs to Estrada, deposited more than P200 million in the bank's six branches in Metro Manila.

Equitable first vice president Annie Ngo said Ricaforte opened and maintained accounts at the Timog-Scout Tobias, Diliman-Matalino, Pedro Gil-Robinson, TM Kalaw-Luneta, Quezon Avenue-Scout Albano and Isadora Hills branches of Equitable from September 1999 to November this year.

Ricaforte told a Senate blue ribbon hearing that she withdrew a total of P200 million from the bank accounts that she delivered to Estrada's personal lawyer Edward Serapio, in April last year.

A summary drafted by the prosecution panel showed that Ricaforte deposited a total of P212,023,944.22 in the six Equitable PCI Bank branches. These are broken down as follows: P94,451,150 at the Timog-Scout Tobias branch, P78,030,000 at the Diliman-Matalino branch, P11,845,000 at the Pedro Gil-Robinson branch, P11,407,777.18 at the TM Kalaw-Luneta branch, P4 million at the Quezon Avenue-Scout Albano branch and P7.5 million at the Isadora Hills branch.

Another "classic case" of money laundering was provided by one of the key witnesses during Estrada's impeachment trial, Clarissa Ocampo.

Ocampo, who was then senior vice president of Equitable PCI Bank, testified that she went to Malacañang on Feb. 4 last year and witnessed Estrada affix the signature "Jose Velarde" on documents pertaining to a P500-million investment agreement with one of his cronies.

Estrada was then extending a loan to Chinese-Filipino businessman William Gatchalian. The P500 million was to be drawn from a P1.2-billion account at Equitable's Pacific Star branch.

Just the beginning

These acts happen because the financial system makes them possible, but the anti-money laundering law is not the sole answer to these problems.

"We must keep in mind that neither the passage of this law nor the formulation of its implementing rules is the end that we seek," the Action for Economic Reforms said.

"The end that we seek is a halt to the bastardization of our financial system," it said. "In this light, the anti-money laundering law is only the beginning of a series of reforms and actions that will have to be undertaken. Among these will be reforms in tax administration, amendments to the BSP charter and investments in the government's investigative capabilities."

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Schedule of Free Seminars at PhilTRONICS 2001

DATE/TIME	TOPICS	SPEAKER
10 October		
11:00-12:00 noon	Solid Waste Mgmt. in the Electronics Industry by: Inca Plastics	Mr. Edgardo Cayton
2:00-3:00 p.m.	EK Pumps Features Seminar by: Iwaki Chemical Pumps	Mr. Norioki Nishi
3:00-4:00 p.m.	Vacuum Technology with Vacuum Ejectors and Suctions Cups by: Pisco Pneumatic Equipment	Engr. Mel Vicencio
4:00-5:00 p.m.	Idec (Izumi) Systems & Control Components by: Idec Izumi	Mr. Ronnie Lee
11 October		
10:30-11:30 a.m. 2:00-3:00 p.m.	Automatic Optical Inspection X-Ray Inspection by: Maxtronix Inc.	Ms. Annie Fong Mr. Ch Liu
11:30-12:30 p.m.	Hibex MDA ICT Machine by: Von Roll Isola Asia Ltd. (Tech Plus Inds)	Mr. Wong Peng Sang
3:00-4:00 p.m.	Leica Digital Camera with Imaging System by: Maedan Enterprise	Mr. Dick Foo Mr. Herbert Funtanar
4:00-5:00 p.m.	Vision System for On-line Inspection of ICs/PCBs by: Benchmark Systems Pte. Ltd.	Mr. Kris Raghavan Mr. Senthil Nathan
12 October		
11:00-12:00 noon	Ultrasonic Cleaning/Welding by: Branson Ultrasonics	Branson Singapore
2:00-3:00 p.m.	Claval Automatic "Flow Control Valves"/ ABS Pumps by: Tytrade International	Mr. David Alexander/ John Sinfield
3:00-4:00 p.m.	Factory Automation Solution by: Yokogawa Phils., Inc.	Mr. Jonathan Esperida

Schedule of Free Seminars at Enviro-Tech Philippines 2001

October 10	1:30-4:30 p.m.	Technology Presentation Part I
October 11	8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.	Technical Seminar co-organized by WEAP
	1:30-4:30 p.m.	Technology Presentation Part 2

Schedule of Free Seminars at Industry Search 2001

Date	Time	Seminars/Speakers
October 10	10:00 am-12:00 nn	Presentation by Unified Tooling Corp. by: Mr. Danny Ramillano/ Mr. Danilo Bayang
	3:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.	Presentation by DPL Semicon
October 11	10:00 am-12:00 nn	Flat Panel Product Demonstration by: Dai-ichi Electronics Corp.
	1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.	Airconditioning Products by: Uni-Air Philipines, Inc.
	3:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.	Industry and Customs Industry and the Environment by: Federation of Philippine Industries
October 12	1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.	Enertech Boilers by: Enertech Systems
	3:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.	2-D to 3-D Modelling by: CIM Technologies

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Inflation seen down on oil, peso factors

INFLATION is expected to tick down in September, thanks to weak demand and stability in food supplies, the peso and the price of oil, giving the central bank room to cut rates if it wants, economists said yesterday.

A Reuters poll of 10 economists this week forecast September inflation would drop to 6.1 percent year-on-year from 6.3 percent in August, and that it could dip as low as 5 percent by the end of the year. The data is expected on Friday.

"We've seen inflation peak, and we expect it to keep trending downward until the end of the year," said Graham Parry, regional economist for Lehman Brothers in Tokyo.

Economic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas last month said inflation could fall as low as 4.7 to 5 percent by the end of the year.

But "if the peso comes under renewed pressure, they could have some difficulty reaching 5 percent," said John Cairns, regional economist for IDEAglobal in Singapore.

The government is targeting an average annual inflation rate of 6 to 7 percent.

Analysts say the lower trend gives the central bank room to cut interest rates, but it has cited inflationary concerns as a reason to hold rates steady after the Sept. 11 attacks on America, leaving it out of step with most other central banks.

The peso, which began to slide at the beginning of the year on economic and political woes, took a breather last month, stabilizing prices of imported goods.

The peso clung to a tight range of 50.8 to 51.4 to the dollar during September, firming slightly from a 50.8 to 53.8 range during August and substantially up from year lows near 56 reached in January.

Food prices, which make up more than 50 percent of the consumer price basket, were expected to remain stable for the rest of the year, thanks to a bumper crop of rice, agricultural officials said last month. *Reuters*

COCKTALES

A grid too far

By Victor C. Agustin

THE MALAMPAYA well started producing natural gas on Oct. 1, but to date the National Power Corp. still could not say when the country would actually be able to harness the Malampaya production into the Luzon grid.

Why? Because the transmission lines that would connect the LNG-powered plant in Ilijan, Batangas, to the Luzon grid have yet to be finished.

To use a crude analogy, the Malampaya situation is akin to a car with its engine running but could not move on because the bridge that it would have to pass to get to the main highway is still down.

In the meantime, the government is paying Shell millions a day to keep the natural gas well operating. Shell delivered the gas on time, actually ahead of contracted time, to find Napocor late with its transmission lines as usual.

Dante's hell

THE BOISTEROUS media scene is bound to get livelier very shortly.

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's personal publicist, Manila Times owner Dante Ang, who has become a punching bag to pro-Erap columnists, is all set to unleash his own version of jihad against his favorite Port Area newspaper.

Hard to Era-dicate

THE HONG KONG partner of the fake Islamic Bank group has left its Tsim Sha Tsui tourist trap address.

Era Assets Ltd. now claims it is holding office at 8/F Jade Center, 98 Wellington St. in Hong Kong's Central district.

Despite the criminal charges filed by the Bangko Sentral, Era's chair, Sri Lankan Akam Ashroff Gaffoor, is continuing with his local prospecting by appointing a Filipino director, Jose G. Mendoza Jr., to sniff out possible quick deals.

Gaffoor and his band of con-men have also abandoned the Washington Tower office in Parañaque's Asiaworld City that the Bangko Sentral/Department of Justice have publicly warned about.

Short takes

- RAMON T. Garcia, the president (or ex-president, depending on your point of view) of the Philippine Stock Exchange, is a *balae* of Vice President Teofisto Guingona, Garcia's daughter, Marivic, being married to Teofisto Jr. The Mindanao-based couple are both lawyers, just like their fathers.
- CARMELO "Butch" Africa, the Erap-appointed chair of the sequestered Philippine Communications Satellite Corp., has not paid rent since September 1998 for the office space his construction company, Dynamic Planners, has been using at the Telecoms Plaza in Buendia.

Heard through the grapevine

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(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

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Offer's good but not good enough, exchange tells FBDC

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange is seeking more improvements in the new offer made by Fort Bonifacio Development Corp. for its future headquarters and unified trading floor.

In a news briefing yesterday, building committee chair Ismael Cruz said the PSE wanted FBDC to deliver on its promises in less than 10 years.

FBDC offered to build and hand over the stock exchange's headquarters in 10 years. Its original agreement with the PSE gave it until 2004 to deliver on its promises.

"We still have to negotiate to further improve and put in the elements that we know are missing," Cruz told reporters. "But given the conditions of the property market, I think this new offer is reasonable enough."

Cruz also said there were at least two items FBDC excluded in its new offer to the PSE that the building committee wanted to restore:

- Some 40,000 square meters of office space must be offered to the members of the stock exchange at discounted prices similar to a deal given to stockbrokerages with offices at the PSE Ayala and Tektite buildings.
- Some 300 parking spaces must be allocated for the stock exchange.

Cruz said offering office spaces to brokers at discounted prices would give them a "clear incentive to buy." By the time the building is ready for occupancy, the property sector should be out of its slump, he said.

In its latest offer, FBDC set aside a total floor area of 12,000 square meters to the PSE that it would hand over in 10 years. The PSE, in turn, would use this area as its head office and main trading floor for at least five years.

Cruz said the stock exchange wanted FBDC to deliver on its promises in seven years instead of 10.

"I am personally confident that we'll be able to resolve this issue amicably and we hope that we don't end up in the courts," he said.

FBDC mulls options to develop Bonifacio

AFTER the failed bidding for Fort Bonifacio Global City's northern central business district project, Fort Bonifacio Development Corp. is now studying the alternative option of entering into a joint venture to develop the area.

Industry sources said several groups, including foreign investors that did not took part in the first auction, were now interested in coming in as a strategic partner for the development of the 18.9-hectare property.

Bonifacio Land Corp., a unit of property developer Metro Pacific Corp., earlier attempted to bid out its 55-percent stake in the project. Ayala Land Inc. was the only group that participated during the bidding, but its offer was rejected.

Ayala Land offered only P1.23 billion for the Bonifacio Land's stake in a new company to be spun off by FBDC. This bid translated to a price of P11,800 per square meter, or a hefty 65-percent discount off the price at which the property was acquired by Metro Pacific in 1995.

A person familiar with the matter said Bonifacio Land was still studying its options and would consider new offers to be laid on the table by other groups.

Apart from Ayala Land, Robinsons Land Corp. of the Gokongwei group of companies and a consortium led by PentaCapital Investment Corp. were also pre-qualified to bid for Bonifacio Land's stake.

There were also some foreign groups who were interested in the auction, according to some sources.

Analysts said after its auction failed, Bonifacio Land would have to develop the project on its own or wait for a better time to dispose of its stake either through another auction or a negotiated sale.

Bonifacio Land wanted to sell its stake to raise funds for its parent company, Metro Pacific, retire its debts and free up resources for the development of the rest of the Fort Bonifacio Global City. *Doris C. Dumlao*

No erroneous, false reports, Meralco assures

BY RONNEL W. DOMINGO

THE MANILA Electric Co. yesterday decried as "erroneous" news reports that it disclosed inaccurate figures in its financial reports for the year 2000.

The INQUIRER reported last Monday that lawyer Leonardo Aurelio accused Meralco, in a letter to the Securities and Exchange Commission, of concealing, through faulty accounting, non-payment of P3 billion in deposit interests allegedly owed to small residential customers.

Daniel Tagaza, Meralco's chief financial officer, said in a news statement that Aurelio had alleged that the firm was withholding as additional deposits the interest on customers' bill/meter deposit.

Meralco's terms and conditions of service state that all customers should make a deposit equivalent to the customer's estimated monthly billing, upon the start of its service.

"The interest becomes payable, together with the deposit, to the customer only upon termination of the electric service," Tagaza said.

He added that the deposit was meant to offset the unpaid bills that the customer may have incurred at the termination of the service.

"We have explained to the SEC that this is part of the terms and conditions of our service, which the Energy Regulatory Board has approved after public hearings," Tagaza said.

The recently enacted Electric Power Industry Reform Law abolished and replaced the ERB with the Energy Regulatory Commission.

Tagaza also said the SEC, through corporation finance department director Justina Callangan, had, in a letter dated Aug. 31, "considered the explanation as meritorious."

"We are in a quandary on why Aurelio is making false allegations," Tagaza said.

He noted that while the motive was not clear, such allegations would definitely sow mistrust and complaints among Meralco's stakeholders and customers.

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Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Tuesday, October 2, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	20,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	49.5	50	49.5	49.5	174,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	23.5	23.5	22.75	22.75	48,000
Global Business Bank Inc	77	77	77	77	3,800
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	193	195	192	193	39,660
Philippine National Bank	49	49.5	49	49.5	31,800
Security Bank Corp.	17	17.25	16.75	17.25	21,600
Union Bank of the Phil.	14.75	14.75	14.5	14.5	196,500
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	220	242	220	242	700
Manulife Financial Corp.	1295	1295	1295	1295	480
Sun Life Financial Serv.	990	990	985	985	970
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	23	23	23	23	10,500
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	840,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	640	645	640	640	570
Piltel	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	10,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	460	460	430	437.5	97,440
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.022	0.022	0.02	0.022	34,500,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	24.25	24.25	23	23	34,800
Manila Electric Co. B	35	35	34.5	34.5	144,100
Petron Corp.	1.3	1.34	1.24	1.28	2,659,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.84	0.84	0.84	0.84	50,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.34	1.34	1.24	1.26	1,801,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Union Cement Corp.	1.12	1,12	1.12	1.12	139,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.04	2.06	2.04	2.06	165,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.6	5.7	5.6	5.7	248,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	11.75	11.75	11.5	11.5	15,000
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	25	25	25	25	2,200
RFM Corp.	2.1	2.18	2.1	2.14	388,000
San Miguel Corp. A	38.5	39	38.5	39	97,400
San Miguel Corp. B	50	51	49.5	51	58,800
Universal Robina Corp.	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	41,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.5	538,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	20,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	22,000,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	100,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.06	1.06	0.99	0.99	17,470,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	200,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	24.25	24.25	24	24	87,500
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	10,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	400,000
Ionics Inc.	7	7	6.5	6.5	80,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	105,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.24	0.245	0.24	0.24	1,970,000
Music Corp.	0.64	0.64	0.62	0.62	120,000
Philtread Hdgs. Corp. B	3.6	4.5	3.6	4.5	82,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.35	300,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	58,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	200,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	40,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.2	0.24	0.2	0.24	600,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	20,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.0725	0.0725	0.06	0.0625	15,500,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.73	0.74	0.73	0.74	340,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	210,000
Manila Jockey Club	14.75	14.75	14	14	30,000
Philippine Racing Club	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	10,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	23.25	23.25	23	23	23,500
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	620	625	620	625	150
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0012	0.0012	0.0012	0.0012	27,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10	10	10	10	2,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10	10	10	10	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10	10	10	10	1,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10	10	10	10	1,000
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.0065	24,000,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	7.5	8	7.5	8	2,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.25	4.25	4.2	4.2	604,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.155	430,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	330,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.2	1.2	1,720,000
City & Land Developers	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	50,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.0575	0.0575	0.0575	0.0575	400,000
SM Development Corp.	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	30,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.9	5.9	5.7	5.7	1,218,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.25	0.25	0.23	0.23	470,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	18,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.155	100,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	250,000
Omico Corp.	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	23,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	4,800,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	20,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	4,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	20,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	7,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	10,000
South China Resources Inc	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	90,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Banks & Fin Svc	37,510	4,308,140.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	52,823,360	2,931,175.00
PRO	,782,000	1,970,020.00
Mining	6,640,000	79,250.00
OIL	1,100,000	20,400.00
GRAND TOTALS:	35,882,870	30,108,985.00

AVERAGES

Banks & Fin Svc	447.14	DOWN .67
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,564.16	DOWN 6.67
PRO	438.98	DOWN 4.32
Mining	1,105.03	DOWN 7.36
OIL	1.33	DOWN .03
All Shares Index	664.89	DOWN .79
Composite	1,105.01	DOWN 0.05

NO. OF ADVANCES: 12; NO. OF DECLINES: 50; NO. OF UNCHANGED:; 24;
NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 86; NO. OF TRADES: 1,529

DISCLOSURES

PREMIERE Entertainment Productions Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Oct. 19, 3 p.m., at the Metropolitan Club, Makati. Only stockholders as of July 2 will be notified and are entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

SAN Miguel Corp. has clarified that its due diligence audit of **Cosmos Bottling Corp.** is still being completed.

* * *

BERNARDINO Abes, a nominee of the **Social Security System**, has been elected director of **First Philippine Holdings Corp.**

* * *

EASYCALL Communications Philippines Inc. has signed an agreement with **Global E-Business Solutions Inc.** for the issuance of 52 million Easycall shares at P1 each to Global.

* * *

BANKARD Inc. has announced the retirement of Rogelio Chua as its president, chief executive and director. He will be replaced by Joven Reyes. In the meantime, Oscar Biason, the company's chief operating officer, will be the company's officer-in-charge.

* * *

ELECTED as a director of **Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp.** was Bro. Andrew Gonzalez. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

Gov't hammering out perks for steel firms

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE MACAPAGAL administration is hammering out an incentive package for the steel industry to attract more investors in reopening and rehabilitating the long-idle National Steel Corp.

Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II said the incentives package would include tariff protection for steel products, specifically those produced by the NSC, such as hot and cold rolled coils, billets and tinplates.

"We're willing to provide tariff protection to the industry only to the extent that this would help new investors of NSC in their start-up," Roxas said.

Stiff competition from steel imports, specifically from Russia, had been blamed for driving up the NSC's losses, which led to its forced closure in November 1999.

The government had liberalized duties on steel following the privatization of the NSC in 1995, and it admitted that it might have opened up the sector too fast and too soon.

Apart from tariff protection, Roxas said, the government was also willing to allow the NSC to avail of fiscal incentives under the Iron and Steel Industry Act.

The NSC was unable to get fiscal perks from the law because these incentives were limited only to companies that were majority-owned by Filipinos.

The NSC has been in the hands of Malaysian investors over the last six years.

The incentives package is being drawn in line with the Department of Trade and Industry-led evaluation committee's decision to resume its search next month for an interim investor to take over NSC following Malaysia's debt rehabilitation agency Pengurusan Danaharta Nasional Bhd.'s reaffirmation of its support to reopen the steel giant's Iligan factory soon.

Roxas said Danaharta had already informed the DTI that it would participate in the evaluation committee to choose a suitable investor for the NSC.

Roxas said Danaharta had primary jurisdiction over the 80-percent stake in the NSC than Hottick-Renong, which suddenly quit the committee and opted to pursue its previous lease agreement.

The investor groups expected to make an offer for the NSC were Cathay Pacific Steel Corp., Voest Alpine, Allengoal, and Glencore International.

W. Bank, Japan asked to guarantee RP loans

FINANCE Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said yesterday the government was considering asking the World Bank and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation to guarantee its sovereign loans and make the borrowing cheaper for the Philippines.

The JBIC, a multilateral financial group, has expressed interest in providing guarantees for any additional yen borrowing that the Philippines may pursue.

The World Bank is being considered to provide guarantees for the government's much-delayed global bond offering, according to well-placed sources.

Camacho explained that pursuing guarantees from global financial institutions was part of the government's strategy in bringing down the cost of its borrowings.

"We can use the JBIC guarantee for any subsequent yen borrowing. We will evaluate after the $500-million 'shibosai' if we still need to do another yen borrowing," he said.

The government plans to raise up to 50 billion yen from a "shibosai," or a private placement, of bonds for its funding requirements next year.

The government has assigned Fuji Bank and Nomura Securities as joint lead managers and Daiwa Securities SMBC as co-lead managers for the government's issue. Nippon Export and Investment Insurance will guarantee the bonds, the statement said.

Camacho said earlier this month that the government was considering a public offer of "samurai" bonds, or a private placement of a bond offer of 10 years or longer worth $300 million to $500 million possibly before the end of the year.

National Treasurer Sergio Edeza told reporters the JBIC offered to guarantee the sovereign borrowing.

If the JBIC's guarantee will make it in time and will be acceptable to the Philippines, the size of the borrowing can go up to as high as $1 billion, Edeza said.

A person familiar with the matter said a guarantee from Nippon would give the government borrowing an investment grade rating that would bring down spreads to a range even lower than the current rate of 2.8 to 3 percentage points over the Yen Interbank Offered Loan.

DOF sets aside BAP's plan to swap idle assets

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance is prioritizing the securitization of the P70-billion real estate portfolio of government housing agencies, setting aside the Bankers Association of the Philippines' proposal to swap its billions worth of foreclosed assets with the state.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the government's priority was to facilitate the "monetization" of the real estate portfolio of state-owned housing agencies, particularly the Housing Urban Development Coordinating Council.

"The BAP proposal is really more complicated. This is the reason why it has not moved much. The focus is really on HUDCC and how we can move their property portfolio," Camacho told reporters.

The BAP, which counts as its members the country's 45 biggest banks, proposed to sell to the Macapagal administration a portion of its foreclosed real estate assets in exchange for government securities. It offered to use proceeds from the sale of its idle assets as housing loans.

"The problem with the BAP proposal is the valuation of the assets and what do we do with more property assets," Camacho said.

Camacho said he had asked Vitaliano Nañagas, chair of the Development Bank of the Philippines, to assist housing agencies in drafting a financial model for the securitization or monetization of their assets.

To help banks unburden their foreclosed assets and soured loans, Camacho said the government was supporting a bill filed by House Speaker Jose de Venecia.

Camacho said the bill, once signed into law, would exempt items undergoing restructuring or being sold to asset management firms from paying capital gains and documentary stamp taxes, relax land ownership policies for foreigners undertaking asset management projects, and rationalize bankruptcy policies.

He said he still had to study the bill filed by De Venecia, but vowed to support the measure and give it the same push as he did the anti-money laundering and power reform laws.

"Once the bill has evolved, I would ask the President to consider it one of the priority legislation," he said.

While the government could not provide direct support for banks in dealing with their bad loans and soured assets, he said the law would give incentives mostly to foreign groups interested to buy bad loans and assets from banks.

As of July, the non-performing loans ratio of commercial banks had swelled to 17.72 percent equivalent to P278.39 billion from 16.96 percent a month earlier. *Clarissa S. Batino*

Gov't to cut growth targets

(From page B1)

has yet to assess the impact of a 15-percent export contraction on the country's economic performance as measured by GDP and GNP.

Camacho, however, is confident that even with a 0.5-percent cut in growth targets, the government can still keep its budget deficit this year within the ceiling of P145 billion.

He said the global slowdown that triggered plans to reduce the targets would have lagged effect on revenue collection.

The International Monetary Fund earlier slashed its projection for the Philippines' GDP to 2.5 percent from 3 percent. The Fund believes that the GDP growth next year will also slow down to 3.5 percent as against the government's low-end target of 4.3 percent.

Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said that the economic team was not yet inclined to revise any of its targets this year or next year. She said the numbers would be firmed up once the actual revenue collection figures for September comes out.

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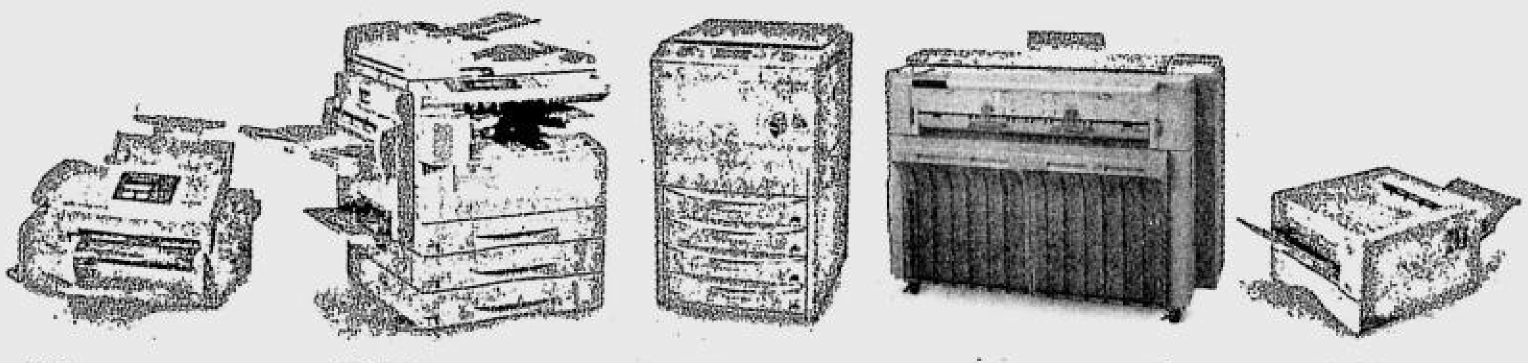

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ANOTHER SETBACK

Peza turns down Piatco plea for tax incentives

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PHILIPPINE Economic Zone Authority board has jettisoned a request by Philippine International Air Terminals Co. Inc. (Piatco) for a waiver of duties on its imported construction materials for the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Passenger Terminal 3 (Naia-IPT3).

The board said Piatco's $350-million Naia-IP3 project was not entitled to tax breaks because it was not an export-oriented activity and that it would be servicing the entire country and not only economic zone enterprises.

The board cited its provisions that limit duty-free importation of construction materials to export and free trade zone enterprises. The board said that goods might be brought tax -and duty- free into economic zones for storage, processing and re-export.

Piatco had claimed that it was eligible for duty-free importation because it was registered as an economic zone facility enterprise whose incentives include the 5-percent tax on gross income in lieu of national and local taxes.

Piatco argued that customs duties were part of national taxes, an interpretation concurred by Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo when he was still chief of the Department of Finance.

But the Peza board ruled that Piatco's request should be taken in the context of its operations and its market or end-users—it would be serving the transit requirements of all businessmen in the country whether they are exporters or not. The agency also stressed that the issue should be decided independently of its concession agreement with the government.

The Peza's rejection is the latest setback suffered by Piatco whose contract has been mired in controversy including allegations that excavation work in the project has been padded by 500 percent and payoffs given to government officials. Piatco, in several full-page ads in major local newspapers, had boasted that its $350-million Naia-3 project would not involve direct government guarantee, subsidy or equity.

Taiwan to slap dumping duties on RP cement

THE TAIWAN International Trade Commission (ITC) has announced its preliminary determination that imports from the Philippines and Korea have caused injury to the Taiwanese cement industry.

The Taiwan Ministry of Finance is set to start computing the "dumping margin" and set the level of antidumping duties. If imposed, the antidumping duties will be in effect for the next five years. Five Taiwanese manufacturers are asking for a 65-percent dumping margin to be imposed on all cement imports from the Philippines.

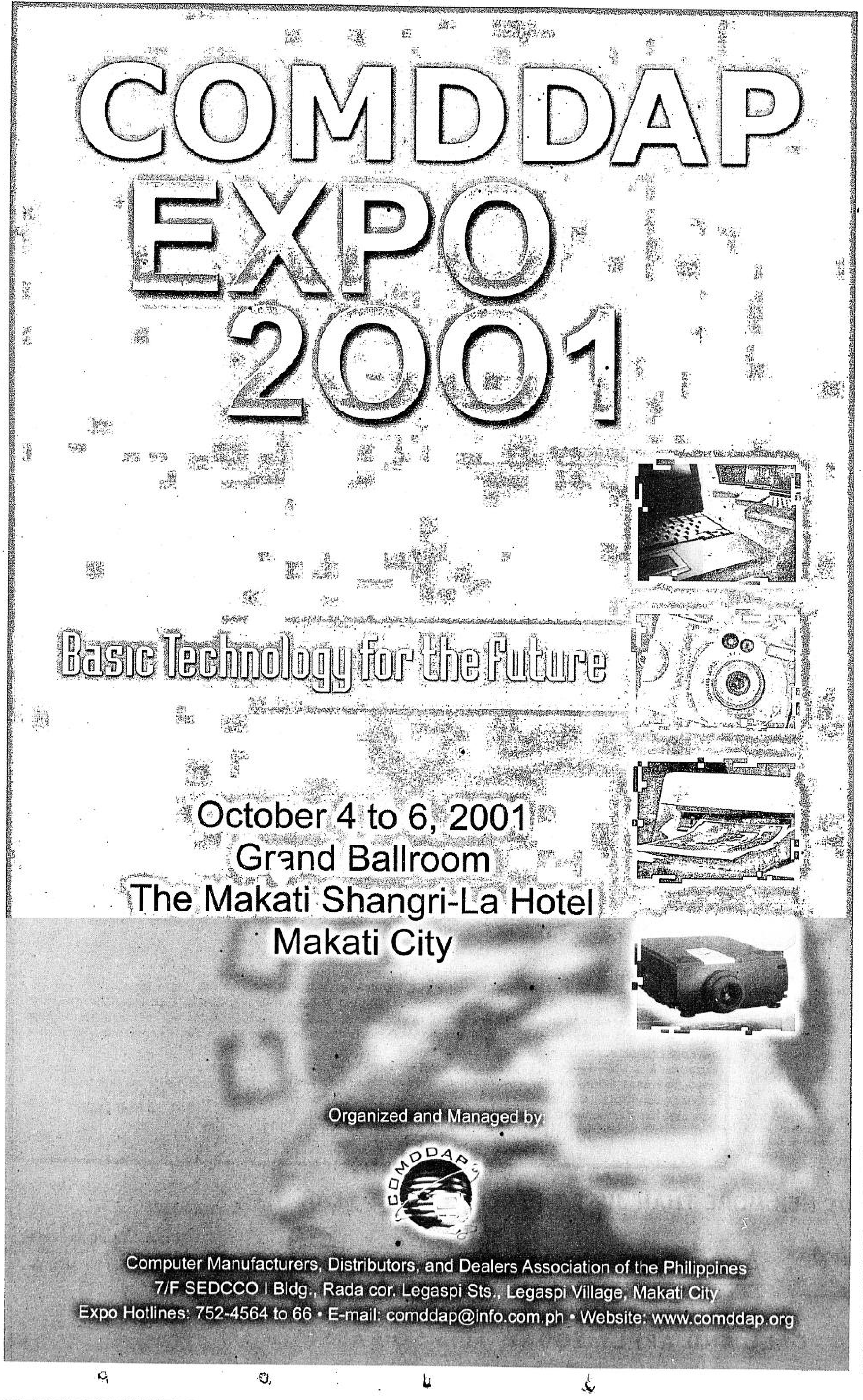
The announcement came as a surprise to Philippine cement producers given that exports of Philippine cement to Taiwan accounted for less than 4 percent of Taiwan's total cement consumption last year.

Five Taiwanese producers led by Taiwan Cement Corp. (TCC) have filed the anti-dumping case last July. They claimed that cement imports from the Philippines have lowered the domestic prices of cement and have thus caused injury to the Taiwanese cement industry.

Philippine producers have argued that other factors are responsible for the decline in the prices of cement in Taiwan. They said that the firing up of TCC's 6 million-ton-per-year mega-plant in Hoping, adding new supply accounting for 32 percent of the country's demand, was largely to blame for the lower cement prices. They said that cement imports from the Philippines were being used as a scapegoat and as an excuse for seeking the closure of the Taiwan market to foreign competition.

Philippine producers also pointed out to the Taiwanese ITC that the slowdown in the Taiwanese economy last year leading to a 46-percent drop in the value of the Taiwan Weighted Stock Market Index (TWII) has brought construction activities to a virtual halt.

In addition, Philippine producers explained that the rivalry between Taiwanese cement manufacturers in the east and cement producers in the west of Taiwan that has been ongoing for the last two years was fundamentally the main cause of lower cement prices in Taiwan.



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6 oil drilling projects slated for next year

By Ronnel W. Domingo

AT LEAST six offshore oil-drilling projects are slated for next year, a source in the Department of Energy said Monday.

The source said the projects would include explorations in the following areas:

- The Northern Coron prospect of Nido Petroleum in Palawan,
- The Cherry and Amy prospects of PNOC Exploration Corp. in Southern Mindoro,
- The Crescent prospect of Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Development Corp. in Western Palawan,
- The Rhino prospect of Unocal in the Sulu Sea, and
- The Santa Monica prospect of Philodrill in Northwest Palawan.

PNOC-EC's Sultan sa Barongis appraisal well in Cotabato is also scheduled for drilling.

For this year, only one well, the Isidro 1-X in Leyte, has so far been drilled. This, however, was discontinued due to technical problems.

In an interview, the source said the DoE had given the go-ahead for the drilling of at least seven wells this year.

He said two more wells were likely to be drilled within the year.

These are the Malampaya-10 appraisal oil well of Shell Philippines Exploration BV and the Victoria exploration well of PNOC Exploration Development Corp. in Central Luzon.

A fourth exploration well in Cotabato, PNOC-EC's Gansing-1, was also slated for drilling this year but was canceled due to security problems.

State-run PNOC-EC planned to drill its third exploratory well in the Cotabato basin where an abundant natural gas deposit was said to be present.

The exploration subsidiary of the Philippine National Oil Co. expected to shell out P220 million for the offshore drilling.

The state firm expects to prove the presence of 60 billion cubic feet of natural gas in that field.

GOINGS-ON

Cocolife gets ISO seal

COCOLIFE received a third issue of ISO 9002, a certification of quality management systems.

Cocolife, the first and only ISO 9002 certified life insurance company, received its first ISO 9002 certification on Dec. 10, 1998. This award had also been issued to Cocolife in the succeeding years with the third and latest issued earlier this year.

In a statement, Cocolife said this meant that the company has been vigilant in maintaining its standards of quality and excellence. Over the years, Cocolife has established performance standards and a foundation for continuous improvement. It also means that it has streamlined its procedures and is constantly attuned to the needs of its customers.

The third reissue of ISO 9002 to Cocolife is concrete evidence that Cocolife has not been amiss of its duties and responsibilities as an institution. Cocolife is ever mindful of its reputation as a reliable and productive insurance company, hence, its continuous efforts to upgrade its products and services to cope with the changing needs of its clients.

RFM exec in lecture series

JOSE Concepcion III, president and CEO of RFM Corp., will deliver a lecture on "Globalization, Information Technology & Human Development" today at the Philippine Normal University in Manila.

The lecture is part of the ongoing Diamond Jubilee University Lecture Series, which is being sponsored by The Carmelites of St. Therese, in cooperation with 15 colleges and universities in Metro Manila.

The lecture is expected to be attended by hundreds of college students and teachers from the biggest and most prominent colleges and universities in the metropolis.

The lecture series, which has the theme Filipino Spiritual Culture and Globalization, started in November 2000 and will run until November this Year.

Nego-power trade fair

THE METRO Manila Chamber of commerce and Industry and the Department of Trade and Industry National Capital Region will stage the 4th Metro Manila Trade Fair dubbed as Nego-Power: Kapit Bisig sa Kalakalan on Nov. 7 to 11 at Megatrade Hall 1, Bldg. B, SM Mega Mall.

Nego-Power is a five-day selling trade fair organized to assist the SMEs in Metro Manila. Designed to promote the products and develop new markets for SMEs, the trade fair will showcase the priority sectors in Metro Manila such as processed food, organic products, gifts , toys and housewares, furniture and furnishings, metals, garments, leatherworks, holiday decors, paper and packaging products.

Participating SMEs may also avail themselves of free seminars on Sources of Financing, E-Commerce, Doing Business in China, Waste Segregation/Composting, Aroma Candle and Soap Making, Tie Dye and Food Waste Recycling and a cooking demonstration by Philfoodex.

WB says terror attacks to increase poor by 10M

WASHINGTON—The economic impact of the Sept. 11 terrorist assaults will plunge another 10 million people into poverty next year, the World Bank said in a report Monday.

"We have seen the human toll the recent attacks wrought in the US, with citizens from some 80 nations perishing in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania," said World Bank president James Wolfensohn.

"But there is another human toll that is largely unseen and one that will be felt in all parts of the developing world, especially Africa," he said in a statement.

"We estimate that tens of thousands more children will die worldwide and some 10 million more people are likely to be living below the poverty line of one dollar a day because of the terrorist attacks."

The World Bank's preliminary economic assessment was based only on expected loss of income, he said.

"Many, many more people will be thrown into poverty if development strategies are disrupted," Wolfensohn said.

The first humanitarian aid to enter Afghanistan since the terrorist attacks, which had halted shipments, reached the capital Kabul on Monday, UN officials said in Peshawar, Pakistan.

Slower growth and recessions would hit the most vulnerable people in developing countries the hardest, the World Bank report said.

"The Bank estimates that an additional 20,000-40,000 children under five years old could die from the economic consequences of the Sept. 11 attack as poverty worsens," it said.

Before the attacks, the World Bank expected developing-country growth to fall from 5.5 percent in 2000 to 2.9 percent in 2001 as a result of the worldwide slowdown before rebounding to 4.3 percent in 2002.

But as the terrorist attacks delayed rich countries' recovery into 2002, the World Bank said it believed developing countries' growth could be cut by 0.5-0.75 percentage points in 2002.

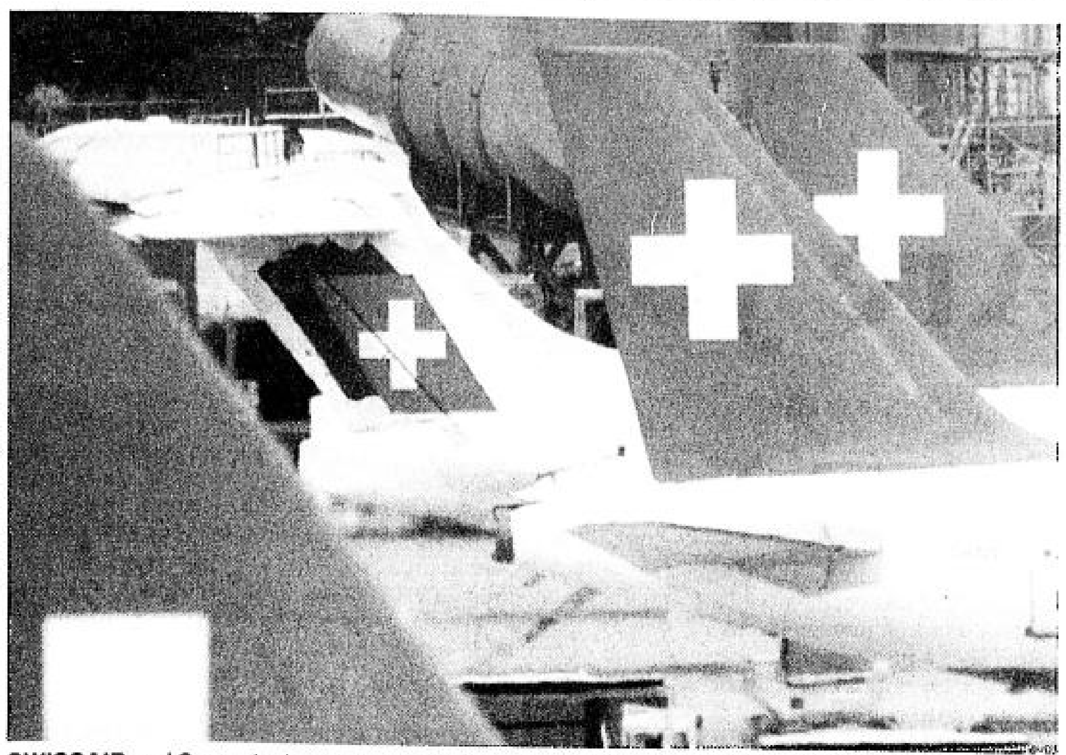
The effects of the attacks on world trade were already being felt, it said.

"Insurance and security costs and delays at customs clearance are among the main factors pushing up the costs of trade," it said. Major shipping lines had increased freight rates to India by 10 to 15 percent.

Tourism had been pounded.

"Around 65 percent of the holidays booked for the Caribbean have been canceled," the World Bank said. "The Middle East is also likely to suffer a sharp decline in tourism revenues during the coming winter."

And as investors fled to safer havens, the already weak flow of capital to developing countries would decline further. *AFP*



SWISSAIR and Crossair planes stand at the airport in Zurich-Kloten. Swissair Group announced that it would sell its holding in Crossair to Switzerland's two biggest banks, UBS and Credit Suisse for about 260 million Swiss Francs.
AP

US moves to avert recession

WASHINGTON—US authorities prepared Monday to slash interest rates and spend heavily in a stepped-up campaign to limit a terrorist-triggered spiral into recession.

As latest data showed the economy faltering even before the full impact of the Sept. 11 attacks took hold, monetary and fiscal authorities pulled out their entire financial arsenal to fight back.

The Federal Reserve's policymakers were widely expected to cut the target for the benchmark federal funds rate by half a percentage point to 2.50 percent at a meeting Tuesday.

It would be the second cut of the same size in just 15 days.

US President George W. Bush was also scheduled to meet with senators Tuesday to draw up a package including anything from tax cuts to an increase in the minimum wage, his spokesperson said.

The total price tag, including $40 billion already passed to rebuild after the attacks and $15 billion for airlines, could run to $100 billion, according to some senators.

Treasury spokesperson Michele Davis said the stimulus package could be ready as early as this week and it might succeed in averting a widely expected recession—technically defined as two quarters of contraction.

While gross domestic product (GDP) may shrink in the third quarter, it could still post growth in the fourth quarter, she said.

The urgency behind the measures was highlighted by figures showing the economy in a fragile state even before the assaults, which are expected to hammer consumer confidence.

Consumer spending edged up just 0.2 percent despite hefty tax rebates in August, latest US government figures showed.

Consumer spending accounts for two-thirds of US economic activity and had been the strongest pillar of gross domestic product (GDP) growth before the feared impact of the attacks.

In September, meanwhile, a private survey by the National Association of Purchasing Management (NAPM) showed manufacturing activity declining for the 14th straight month.

The NAPM's purchasing managers index, a closely watched barometer of US manufacturing activity, fell 0.9 points to 47.0 in September, but the full impact of the attacks was not expected until at least October.

The policy-making Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) will fret over consumption in the third quarter when it meets Tuesday, said Naroff Economic Advisors president and chief economist Joel Naroff.

"While government spending could keep the economy out of recession on a technical basis, the Fed has to be concerned that the only sector that is growing is the government and that does not make for a fundamentally sound economy," he said.

"Look for a cut tomorrow and with the expectation being that it will be 50 basis points, the Fed will most likely not want to disappoint." *AFP*

Compaq issues profit warning

SAN FRANCISCO—Texas computer maker Compaq warned Monday that it expected to post a third-quarter operating loss of five to seven cents per share, a sharp downturn from predictions of earnings of a nickel per share.

The computer maker blamed its losses on a worldwide economic downturn that has worsened since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on New York and the Pentagon.

"The events of Sept. 11 disproportionately affected the current quarter—market demand has slowed and transportation and logistics were disrupted," chair and chief executive officer Michael Cappellas said in a statement.

Compaq said it now expected sales for the quarter to range from $7.4 billion to $7.5 billion.

Analysts expected quarterly sales to top $8 billion.

In a related announcement, Silicon Valley-based Hewlett-Packard, which is in the process of acquiring Compaq, stated in public filings it was going to be slashing its payroll.

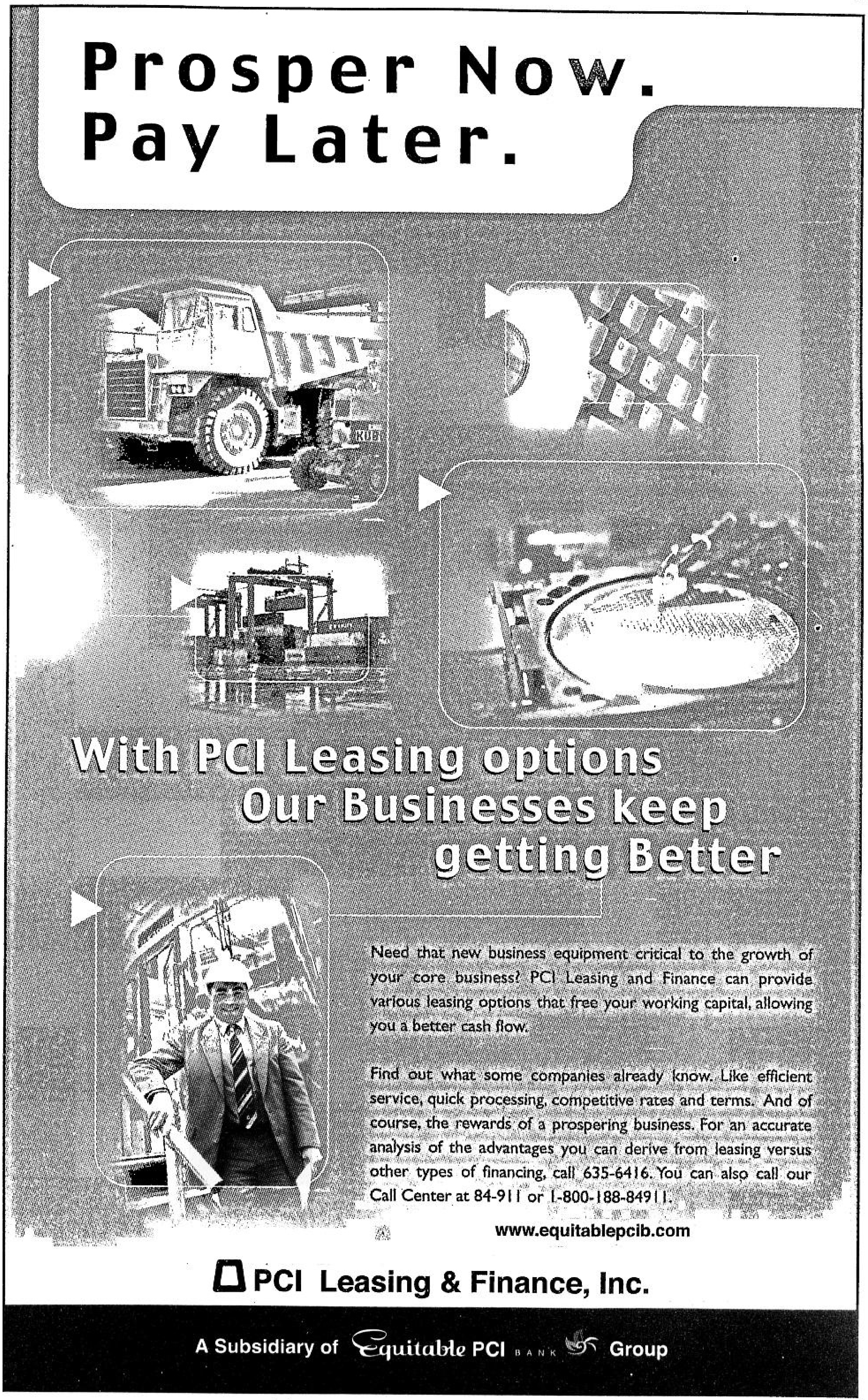
"During the period between now and closing, HP will continue to make decisions that may involve further reductions in staffing levels in defined areas of the company," the company stated in papers filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

In July, HP said it was cutting 6,000 from its payroll.

That same month, Compaq said it was sacking 8,500.

When the two companies announced their merger in September, the companies said they would axe another 15,000 jobs.

The technology sector was ailing before the September attacks, and the economic impact of those assaults is rippling across the world's economy. *AFP*



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PEOPLE at WORK

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ■ **REGINA GALANG REYES**, Subsection Editor

Are you in the right career?

By Josie O. Santamaria

(This is the last part of the 4-part article on "Career change is cure for work malaise.")

ONCE you have found an entry-level job in the field and occupation that you want, you can now go through the stages of a professional career. The following is the professional/technical career path:

1. Apprentice

The person is new on the job and is helped by a mentor (who can be an informal or formal one) to acquire the knowledge and skills required by the job.

2. Independent contributor

The person is now competent and can function on his own. He has clearly defined goals and is accountable in meeting them.

3. Mentor

The person transfers her knowledge and skills as well as the corporate values to the apprentice. An independent contributor can become a mentor if given recognition by the organization in the absence of vertical career moves.

4. Sponsor

The person is the head of a functional unit and is involved in developing policies to shape the direction by which the career can have impact in the life of the organization.

As you go through the various stages of your professional career, how do you know if you are moving into the right career? There are four ways to determine whether you are moving into the right career. These are:

- One, visualize yourself being in an ideal job. Sit quietly by yourself, close all your senses to distractions (if they come, acknowledge them and set them aside in your mind), and focus on answering these questions. What do you do—with people, things, ideas, data and information—that you enjoy doing the whole day? And where do you do them? With whom?
- Two, ask yourself, "Among the people I've met or known or have read about, whose job would I most love to have? What skills does it take to do this job? Do I have them?"

To answer these questions, interview people in the career that interests you. Ask them: How did they get into their present career/job? What education, training or experiences were required? What do they do in their current job? What skills enable them to do what they do? What do they like about their present job? What don't they like about it? What are the sources of satisfaction and happiness and of frustration and dissatisfaction? How do they cope with frustrations?

Visualize yourself being that person and doing the job on a day-to-day basis. Then, ask yourself: would I like this new career? A career that may appear to be glamorous and exciting when we hear about it or see someone in it, may not be that great when we see it "up close and personal." Assess your skills, interests, needs and values and then, assess if the job fits you.

When you interview people, remember that the interview must be brief, certainly not more than 15 to 20 minutes, so as not to encroach on the time of the interviewee. You may need to interview at least three people in your target career so that your data is objective, current, reliable and valid.

How do you find people in your target career? A good way is through your network. Ask people you know and who may know the right people.

- Three, participate in a Career Planning Workshop. Proactive organizations provide this resource to their employees but if your organization doesn't, then you'll have to invest your own resources (personal time and money) to enroll in one. The personal investment is going to be worthwhile.
- Four, go through the process of career planning by buying a career planning workbook and accomplishing the steps required.

If you love your job and do it with passion, you will do it almost to perfection. The rest—money, promotion and recognition—will follow.

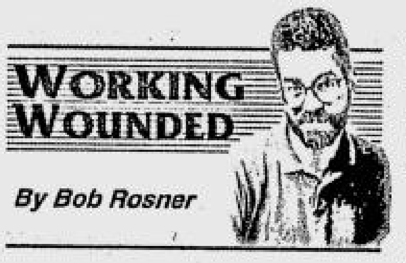
You can also be successful, happy and fulfilled in a career that does not require higher levels of education. You only have to look at successful beauticians, hairdressers, cooks, network marketers and so on. However, if you want to pursue a master's or a doctorate degree in a career field, do so only after carefully planning your career. Sometimes, a doctorate degree can make you overqualified and threaten the emotional security of your boss and peers.

It is better to plan your career change while you still have a job. Since you don't know how long you will get to keep your present job, which you may like, you need to do your career planning now. So, when the inevitable happens, you are ready. You won't be as devastated as those who are caught flatfooted.

(The author is president of Career Systems, Inc., a consultancy and training firm specializing in career development services for organizations and individuals. She has written two books: "Career Planning Workbook" and "Career Counseling: Cases and Techniques." Send feedback to carsys@qinet.net*)*

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

What are your secrets for becoming a better listener?



By Bob Rosner

DEAR WW: My boss criticized me recently for not listening to her. Is there any way to become a better listener?

Sounds Of Silence

Listen to this story. I once took a yoga course from a guy who was dressed in white from the tips of his sneakers to the top of his turban. We knew he practiced an Eastern religion, so when someone finally asked him why, we expected him to quote the spiritual teachings of his guru. "Nah," he said, "It's just a little trick I play on myself. It's hard to be unholy when you're wearing all white."

Well, you can learn a trick from my teacher and play a few tricks on yourself in order to become a better listener. Start by picking up Roger Fritz's book, "Think Like a Manager" (Career Press, 1993). Fritz's primary audience is people who are new to management, but I think everyone needs to think like a manager—and to listen like a good one. Here are five techniques to help you, adapted from his book.

1. Clarify.

Ask questions such as "Is this the problem as you see it?" "Do you mean . . .? "Can you clarify this?" They'll give you additional information and help you understand all sides of a problem. Given the vast number of managers who subscribe to the business philosophy "ready, fire, aim," many people today appreciate someone who takes the time to clarify how others see a situation.

2. Be neutral.

Neutral comments such as "Uh-huh" and "That's interesting" convey that you're interested and encourage the other person to keep talking. Of all the techniques, this one is often the hardest because it requires you to really focus on what the other person is saying. But if you get really good at this technique you might be able to quit your job and become a psychotherapist.

3. Restate.

Use phrases such as, "As I understand it your plan is..." and "You said..." "So you feel . . ." They allow you to show that you are listening and that you understand what is being said. The best part of restatement is that it allows you to catch misunderstandings early.

4. Be reflective.

Use phrases like, "You feel that . . ." and "You felt that you didn't get a fair shake . . ." It's one thing to know what a person said but a whole different thing to know how they feel. (Just hum the song "Feelings" and you'll see exactly what I mean.)

5. Summarize.

Try, "These are your key ideas..." or "If I understand how you see the situation . . ." Don't always be the first one to jump to conclusions, it's often more valuable to draw out the conclusions of others.

Use the tricks above and you'll discover the treats of hearing what others have to say.

Here are the results of the recent workingwounded.com poll: How would you rate your listening skills?

—I catch every word, 5.2 percent

—Could you repeat the question, 25.8 percent

—I hear most of what is said, 68.8 percent

Our winning listening strategy comes from Saunders in cyberspace. "I come from a family of interrupters. I've learned that to ensure that others have 'air time' I need to not respond as quickly or eagerly as I would with my sisters or at work. My son also helps by reminding me to 'not steal someone else's thunder' after I've finished someone's sentence for them."

(E-mail feedback to bob@workingwounded.com.*)*

People *at* Work *Live!* Seminar Series offers survival skills training for risky times

JACOB

SANTAMARIA

BARKER

"SHARPEN the saw" is what people in business and at work should do in these times of uncertainty and risk.

With this perspective, the Philippine Daily Inquirer is offering timely topics for these tough times to sharpen the survival skills of working professionals, managers and executives, entrepreneurs and businessmen.

As its last quarter offering, People at Work Live! Seminar Series will be conducting learning sessions this Nov. 13, 14 and 15, 2001 with the following topics and resource persons: "Effective Influencing Skills" to be conducted by Alan Barker, "Effective Conflict Resolution Techniques" to be tackled by Josie Santamaria, and "Managing Risks in Life and at Work," to be shared by David Jacob.

Barker is the Regional Director for Asia Pacific of Strategic Consulting Services, Inc., a management consulting firm with branches worldwide. Santamaria is president of Career Systems and founder of the Career Development Association of the Philippines. Jacob is the president and CEO of Marsh Philippines, a global firm specializing in risk management services for client companies.

At the end of the learning sessions, participants will be able to learn vital skills that they can apply in their companies and in their personal lives. For inquiries, call People at Work section 897-8808 local 554.

Participate in a prayer workshop for peace

RECIPES for LEARNING

By Moje Ramos-Aquino

ONE time, I turned on my TV to Fox News and encountered a pleasant surprise. There was a report from Ground Zero in New York City that the volunteer fire and police teams say that the only thing pushing them to undertake the very risky and dangerous search and rescue operations is that they pray together before they venture into the ruins of the WTC. How heartwarming to hear such public and unabashed display of faith in the USA!

Without doubt, in everything that we do, we need to have God at the center of it all. Fulfilling our Life Plans can only be accomplished with lots of faith in Him. Therefore, we need to constantly connect with Him for help and inspiration. And there is no better way to do this than to pray and meditate constantly.

To continue our topic on Managing Our Time in Order to Live Happily Ever After, we shall discuss the 4Ws and 1H of praying. This is a timely topic because we are celebrating the National Laity Week in honor of the lay members of the Catholic communities—meaning all of us baptized Catholics who are not priests and nuns.

Ways of praying

Let me share with you the various ways you and I can pray and enjoy our conversations with God from various books on the subject matter. These are: "Praying with Catherine McAuley" by Helen Burns and Sheila Carney, "An Authentic Woman" by Betty Claire Moffatt and "A Harvest of Reflections" by Justin Matott.

First, to quote Ms. Burns and Carney: "Open yourself to the power of prayer. Every human experience has a religious dimension. All of life is suffused with God's presence. So remind yourself that God is present as you begin your period of prayer. Do not worry about distractions. If something keeps intruding during your prayer, spend some time talking with God about it. Be flexible because God's Spirit blows where it will.

"Prayer can open your mind and widen your vision. Be open to new ways of seeing God, people and yourself. As you open yourself to the Spirit of God, different emotions are evoked, such as sadness from tender memories or joy from a celebration recalled. Our emotions are messages from God that can tell us much about our spiritual quest. Also, prayer strengthens our will to act. Through prayer, God can touch our will and empower us to live according to what we know is true.

"Finally, God speaks to us continually and touches us constantly. We must learn to listen and feel with all the means that God has given us.

"Come to prayer with an open mind, heart and will."

Sacred space

Second, create a sacred space. If available, pray in privacy and silence. This could be in your own room, in a chapel or church or a meditation room. You need to clear your mind of any worldly cares when you speak with God to enable you to hear Him. Communicating with God is two-way when you try hard enough. You might also try to create the proper mood using candles, a crucifix or an open bible.

If a private room is not available, find or create a quiet, safe place within yourself. This could be while you are commuting to and from work, while sitting in line at the doctor's office or while waiting for someone or something. Do the best you can, knowing that God is present everywhere.

Third, listen to meditative music and spiritual songs. They soothe your mind, heart and soul making you ready to focus beyond your mundane existence. Better yet, hum or sing your favorite hymn or praise song. Close your eyes as you do this and savor the words and melody in your lips and mind. My own favorites are "Gregorian Chant," "Tanging Yaman" and the piano music of George Winston.

Spiritual books

Fourth, read the Bible or any of your favorite spiritual books. Read a passage or essay several times, then concentrate on one or two sentences, pondering their meaning for you and their effect on you. Jesus engages us in guided imagination with the parables and stories in the Bible. In the end, you might want to resolve to do something.

I love the books of Dr. Rachel Naomi Remen, "Kitchen Table Wisdom" and "My Grandfather's Blessings." They contain stories that heal and stories of refuge, strength and belonging.

Fifth, say your favorite prayers such as the Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Angel of God, Act of Contrition and others again and again. When I am afraid or uncertain or worried or angry or embarrassed or overly excited, I repeat my favorite mantra or prayer words "Jesus, Mary, I love you, save my soul" until I calm down or I am out of danger and I could think clearly. This always works for me. When I forget to do this, I get caught up in the web of my emotions and I can't think clearly and positively. Repeated slowly in harmony with your breathing, the short prayer or mantra helps you center your heart and mind on one action or attribute of God. You give God a window to help you.

Actions as prayers

Sixth, do some physical activity. Go out for a walk. Jog. Dance. Smell the flowers. Admire the colorful butterflies. Actions can be meaningful forms of prayers.

Many times, in our haste and success, we do forget that there is a God. We think that we are the ones making things happen. Our prayers will help us experience new ways of seeing God, our friends and colleagues, ourselves and our natures.

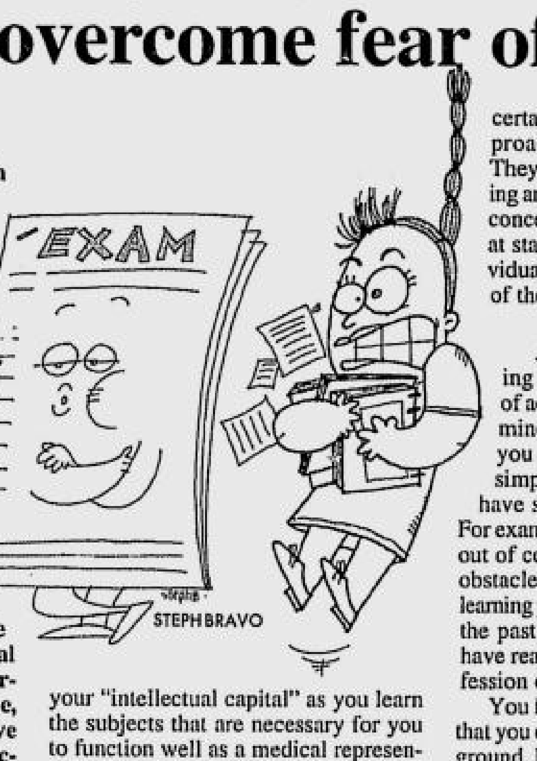
Prayer unites. Remember what we learned in kindergarten that the family that prays together, stays together. It has united us as a nation in many political crises we have been through and we all emerged winners. It is now uniting America and forcing them to look deep into themselves. Wars cannot result to peace. Prayers can. When two or more people come together in prayer, God is in their midst.

Shall we pray now, together?

(Send feedback to Moje.Ramos@Aquino.ZZN.com*)*

'I want to overcome fear of exams'

By Tita Datu Puangco



STEPH BRAVO

I AM a medical representative in one of the leading pharmaceutical companies. I don't have a medical background. I am grateful that our training department has designed an interactive training program that makes learning the different modules for the Medical Representative Accreditation Program (MRAP) interesting and fun.

I enjoy going to these learning sessions because I learn a lot. However, there is an exam requirement and as the day of the exam draws near, I am starting to have the jitters. What advise can you give me so that when the day of the actual exam arrives, I will be able to overcome my fears and do well? You see, I have been out of college for five years. I also have difficulty balancing my work and studies.

Anxious Medical Representative

Advice

FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

Fear of exams is likely to be experienced by majority of examinees. However, what matters most is what fear does to you. There is the fear that brings out the best in us. On the other hand, there is the fear that paralyzes us. What can you do to overcome the great stress linked to your fear of taking the accreditation examinations?

Recognize value

First, recognize the value and the benefit of taking and passing the exam. I understand that the exam is an opportunity to enable people in your profession to be accredited professionally. It is modeled after similar accreditation programs in the United States, Canada and Australia. At the same time, it has been customized to suit local conditions.

Think of the future benefits. Getting the accreditation is likely to enhance your "intellectual capital" as you learn the subjects that are necessary for you to function well as a medical representative. It will likewise enable you to pursue your career across companies, should you so decide in the future.

Then, ensure that you spend adequate time and effort in preparing for the exams. Do not wait for the last minute to prepare. Draw a timetable that will enable you to cover all the subjects to be reviewed. Be faithful to your schedule. Try to use effective time management tools, so that you are able to balance meeting your job targets at the same time study for the exams.

Get support group

Get a support group. I am sure several other med reps from your company are taking the accreditation exams. Pinpoint those persons who are diligent and patient and have the same drive and motivation towards learning. They can boost your spirit when your interest or enthusiasm begins to wane. You can provide mutual support through joint review sessions.

Make your training group your ally. If you have questions and doubts about certain topics, don't hesitate to approach your training specialists. They are there to ensure your learning and will welcome listening to your concerns. They realize how much is at stake, not just for you as an individual but for the prestige and image of the company as well.

Inquiring mindset

Adopt a confident and inquiring mindset. Study for the purpose of acquiring knowledge and bear in mind how that knowledge can help you do a better job. The exam is simply a measure of how well you have studied. Demystify your fears. For example, your fear that having been out of college for five years will be an obstacle. Is this true? Look at all the learning programs you have gone through the past five years. Or the books you have read, whether related to your profession or not.

You fear may stem from your worry that you come from a non-medical background. Look at this situation as a challenge rather than as a problem. Ask yourself, what are the worst things that can happen if you fail the exams? Then, debunk your fears one by one. They may not be as bad as you imagine them to be.

Visualization

Visualize yourself going through the exams, answering the questions correctly and getting your professional certificate and pin. Anticipate also the questions that are likely to be asked. Try going through a mock exam. A day before the exams, go and visit the place where the exams will take place. This will ensure that you don't waste time finding the place. Get a good night's rest and be mentally alert. These will help reduce your level of anxiety.

Finally, say a prayer for grace and enlightenment. May you pass the accreditation exams with flying colors. All the best.

(Ms Puangco is the CEO and President of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send comments, feedback or requests for advice for problems at work through e-mail to ancillaedc@pacific.net.ph *or fax to 892-2902.)*

People, Events & Products

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Assistant Editor
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Southville sends students to foreign schools

SOUTHVILLE International School affiliated with foreign universities (Sisfu) is accepting enrollees in a revolutionary college educational system which allows students to study locally, earn foreign and advanced diplomas under the instruction of internationally capable experts, with the opportunity of pursuing their bachelor's degree overseas.

Sisfu offers courses such as international business, international marketing, advertising and public relations management, computer graphics and animation, information technology and hotel and restaurant management. Foreign diplomas in these courses give credentials to graduates.

Diplomas and bachelors' degree in such courses are made possible by special articulation arrangements between Sisfu and foreign universities like London City College/Schiller International University; Insearch/University of Technology, Sydney, Australia; and Ihmes, International Hotel School, United Kingdom.

Students enrolling in the London City College program may spend their first two years at the Sisfu campus and earn foreign diplomas. They may also decide to pursue higher studies in any one of the Schiller International University campuses in Europe and the United States to pursue their bachelor's degrees.

Those under the hotel and restaurant management program take the first nine months in the Las Piñas campus, during which they learn hands-on the basic aspects of hotel operations. This includes front office management, food and beverage, marketing, customer care, hospitality, housekeeping and rooms supervision, accounting, the Fidelio system, and European studies.

For their practicum, students are involved in the running of a fine dining restaurant, a kitchen, a bar, and a hotel suite. After completing the nine-month program, they receive a diploma, making them eligible for transfer to the Isle of Man campus in the British Isles where they will continue their three-module second year and nine months of paid practicum.

Those enrolled in IT and computer graphics and animation courses need only to complete four semesters at Sisfu to gain a level four certificate and a diploma from Insearch/University of Technology, Sydney. These internationally recognized credentials allow them to transfer to the main campus in Sydney to earn their bachelor's degree in four more semesters with automatic full transfer of credits.

These exciting and internationally recognized educational programs allow parents to save on the cost of their children's courses, and prepare students for highly competitive jobs in the international market.

In all the programs, Sisfu facilitates all documentation needed for students to further their studies abroad, if they decide to.

For more information, call Joyce at 820-9181/820-5952 or text 0919-652-4520.

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PLDT CASH CARD ACCEPTED IN SM

ePLDT and Shoemart (SM) recently signed a memorandum of agreement for the acceptance of PLDT Cash Card as a medium of payment in all SM Department Stores nationwide. The PLDT Cash Card is a multi-application smart card that can be used for retail, fastfood, parking, vending, transport and payphone applications. Shown signing the MOA (from left) are PLDT senior vice president Claro Carmelo P. Ramirez, SM vice president Ricky Lim, ePLDT co-managing director lawyer Ray C. Espinosa, SM vice president Jorge Mendiola, SM assistant vice president Antonette Lao, and ePLDT co-managing director Ariel A. Roda.

PARTNERS IN EVIDENCE-BASED HEALTH CARE

PhilamCare Health Systems Inc. launched the Compendium of Philippine Medicine (Treatment Guidelines from Philippine medical societies) to its clinic network at the Philam Tower in Makati. Shown (from left) are Jesus Verne D. Quiazon, president and CEO of PhilamCare; Dr. Clemente Gatmaitan, chair of the PhilamCare Medical Advisory Board; Melanie Lantin, chair of Medicomm Pacific Inc.; Jose L. Cuisia, Jr, chair of the board, PhilamCare; Dr. Erlinda L. Tiuseco, SVP and medical director of PhilamCare.

METROBANK FOUNDATION AWARDS OUTSTANDING TEACHERS OF 2001

The Metrobank Foundation recently awarded the winners of its Search for Outstanding Teachers for 2001 in ceremonies held during Metrobanks's 39th anniversary celebration at the Metrobank Plaza Auditorium in Makati City. Shows are the awardees with Metrobank and Metrobank Foundation officers and judges, from left Dr. Graciano Yumul, Dr. Nuria Castells, Dr. Ricardo Abad, Gersim Lumintac, Benjamin Paragas, Shirley Jusayan, Metrobank president Antonio S. Abacan Jr., Metrobank Foundation president Placido L. Mapa Jr., CHED commissioner Ma. Cristina Padolina, Metrobank chair George S. K. Ty, Vice President Teofisto Guingona, Senator Renato Cayetano, Justice Josue Bellosillo, DECS undersecretary Fe Hidalgo, Ninie del Rosario, Lavina Laforga, Jean Borlagdan, Carmen Salazar, Evelyn Caja and Johann Cawaling.

NESTLE ICE CREAM PARLOR OPENS AT ROCKWELL

Nestle formally inaugurates its newest showcase of cool ice cream concoctions at the concourse level of the Power Plant Mall-Rockwell Center. Special guests of honor are Oscar Lopez, vice chair of Rockwell Land and his wife, shown here cutting the ceremonial ribbon. They are assisted by store owner Bill Velhagen and Ian Donald, SVP and division manager of Nestle Ice Cream. Fr. Von Jose Vargas officiated a short but solemn prayer before proceeding with the store blessing. The customary coin throwing signaled the start of fun activities – balloon twisting, face painting, body tattooing, ventriloquist acts and parlor games. Kimy and Chamyto also made their appearance to the delight of the kids. Free scoops of ice cream and concoctions were also given away for free, and a concert by South Border was also staged at the open park to cap the event.

3M helps build up food security

3M Philippines is a staunch supporter of the adoption of the hazard analysis critical control point (HACCP) system by all restaurants and hotels in the country. It recently sponsored a seminar on the application of the HACCP System by hotels and restaurants. The HACCP is a system that identifies specific hazards to food security and appropriate measures to be taken to prevent them. The HACCP recommends a system to be adapted that focuses on the prevention of the development of hazards rather than just the end-product testing for harmful elements in the food we eat.

The HACCP entails the involvement and commitment of an entire team of professionals who will work together to ensure the acceptable level of safety of food. This team includes agronomists, veterinarians, production personnel, public health specialists, food technologist, environmental health practitioners, chemists and engineers. This system is highly compatible with implementation of quality management systems such as the ISO 9000 series.

Some of these hotels and restaurants--Hotel Intercontinental, New World Renaissance, Don Enrico's and Max's Restaurant--participated in the recently held seminar on HACCP at the AIM Conference Center. This seminar was conducted by Shirley Guevarra of the Department of Hotel Restaurant Institution Management and Ruben Bueno of MacroAsia Eurest Catering Services. These establishments sent sanitation officers and food beverage managers. For more information, call 3M Philippines at 813-3781 to 95.

Bits & Clips

AME consumer behavior confab

SOME of the most recognized local and multinational firms have signed up for the "Strategic Marketing Conference on Consumer Behavior" slated on Oct. 4 and 5 at the AIM Conference. Jollibee, Novartis AC Nielsen, Sun Life of Canada, San Miguel Corp. packaging products, Goldilocks, Malayan Insurance, Sanofi-Synthelabo, Ever Corp., Viva Video, PLDT and Sanyo have signed up for the conference which is organized by the Association of Marketing Educators (AME) in cooperation with Mansmith and Fielders. For more information on the Strategic Marketing Conference on Consumer Behavior call 893-6459 and 892-3261.

Olsha gathering for a cause

THE COR Unum Alumni Organization of Olsha Inc. (CUAOOI) will again hold a get together of Metro Manila-based Olshans on Oct. 19, Friday, from 6 p.m. onwards. Venue will be at the Magkasalo Restaurant along Congressional Avenue, Project 8, Quezon City. The activity will be a fund-raising event, the proceeds of which will go to the CUAOOI scholarship program. Tickets are available at P100 each. For particulars, call Nelson Rendon (0917-8371464) Rey Quindara (0917-9601294), Grig Montegrande (528-0213) or Joan Guiang (749-2693 / 0919-2850784).

Sta. Isabel PR exhibit

STA. Isabel College will hold an art exhibit entitled "Image Fusion" from Oct. 3 to 11. The opening ceremony will be at the St. Elizabeth of Hungary Covered Court at 2 p.m. The event is a joint project of the junior and senior BS Public Relations students enrolled in Advocacy Advertising and Basic Fine Arts classes, respectively, under instructors Mona Sheryll Paderes and Christopher Coma. To be displayed are sample advocacy ads by the juniors and art works in pastel, watercolor and oil by the seniors. The exhibit will highlight the relevance of such arts in public relations work. In addition to being a culminating activity for the said classes, the PR Department also aims to promote public relations as an art, a profession and a course.

INK JET PRINTER
EPSON STYLUS PHOTO 895

EPSON INTRODUCES PRINTER

Epson Philippines Corp., the country's leader in digital imaging solutions, introduced Stylus C20SX, an affordable four-color inkjet printer, in a presscon held recently at the Powerplant Mall, Rockwell Center. Targeted to consumer and small office-home office (Soho) market, Epson Stylus C20SX is now available in all Epson dealer shops and loaded with features like dual ink cartridge for true color fidelity, high quality photo printing, speed printing at 6.5 pages per minute for black text and 3.5 pages per minute for photo color prints and easy printer installation and setup. Shown (from left) are Hiroaki Ito, president of Epson Philippines Corp. and Jino Alvarez, sales and marketing manager, with the new Epson Stylus Photo 895 and Epson Stylus C20SX Ink jet printer.

LICENSING AGENT OF THE YEAR

Marilu Magsaysay Corpus, CEO and president of Click! Licensing Inc. was recently awarded by Sesame Street as the 'licensing agent of the year' at the Club Room, New York City. She beats licensing agents in Asia for the prestigious award. In photo are (from left) Annette Augeri, director, product development; David Albano, head of finance; and Maura Regan, director of Asia Pacific Licensing.

DLSU TAFT TOWER PROJECT MOA SIGNING

De La Salle University System (DLSU System) and E. Ganzon Inc. (EGI) recently entered into a memorandum of agreement, whereby 92 residential units of the EGI's Taft Tower Condominium shall be secured for members of the DLSU System. Shown during the launch of the housing project are DLSU System president Brother Rolando Dizon, FSC (center); EGI president Eulalio Ganzon (right) and Cesar Lugto, first vice president of Metrobank and Co. Inc.

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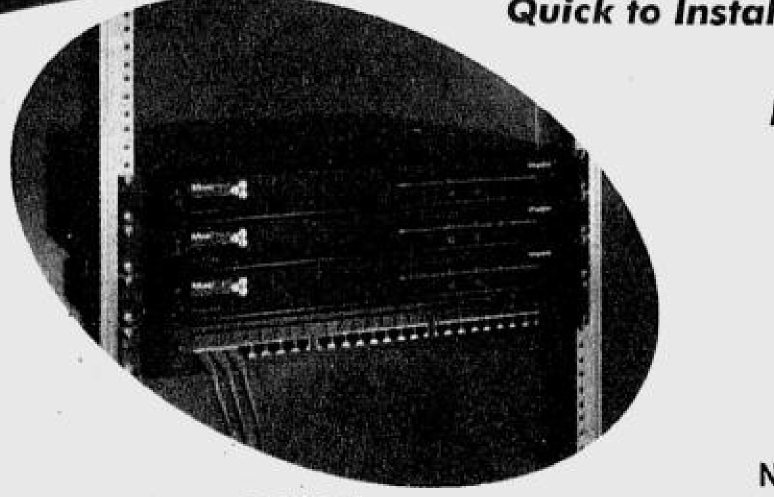

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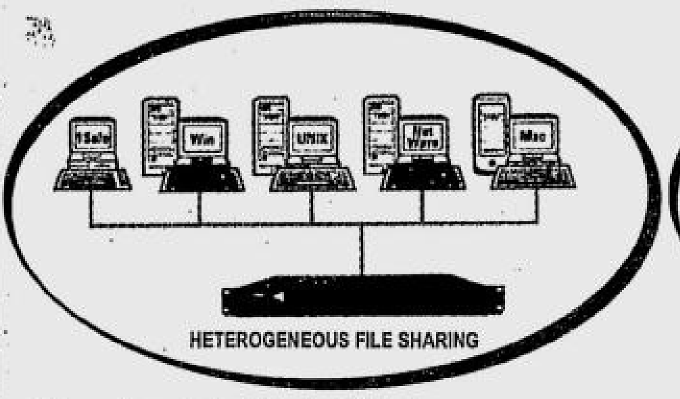

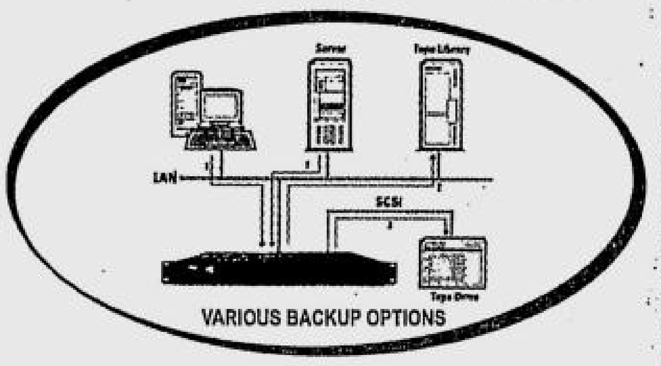

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Japan to urge G7 to calm forex mart

TOKYO—Japan's Finance Minister Masajuro Shiokawa said Tuesday he would urge Group of Seven (G7) partners to help fend off the impact of last month's terror attacks on currency markets when they meet at the weekend.

"I am planning to propose again that G7 countries should cooperate in stabilizing the US currency and providing ample liquidity to cope with the events after the terrorist attacks," Shiokawa told reporters.

"I would like to gain a consensus that we should join hands to avoid a scenario that speculators stir the market by taking advantage of this timing," Shiokawa said.

Finance ministers and central bank governors from the world's richest nations will gather in Washington on Saturday for their first meeting since the terrorist strikes in the United States on Sept. 11.

"The main purpose of the meeting is to send a message to the world that the G7 nations firmly back US efforts against terrorism," said Yasuo Goto, a researcher at Mitsubishi Research Institute.

"There may not be any surprises to emerge from the talks, but it is still meaningful to hold the meeting at a time when chances of a global slump are rising in the wake of the terrorist attacks," said Goto.

Shiokawa told reporters Tokyo remained cautious about the dollar's movements even after it recently appreciated to above the 120-yen level.

"Even now, we are still alert to the dollar/yen's moves," Shiokawa said.

"I feel the dollar may fall if we stay off our guard, even momentarily," he said.

"If we see signs of a drastic fall in the dollar/yen, we are ready to intervene in the market unilaterally, based on our sole judgment," he added.

Shiokawa said the United States welcomed Japan's intervention in the market over the past two weeks to cap recent yen gains.

Japan's ministry has repeatedly instructed the Bank of Japan to sell yen for dollars since the attacks, which weakened the dollar against major currencies.

It has also asked the European Central Bank and US Federal Reserve to sell the Japanese unit on its behalf.

In September the government spent over 2.3 trillion yen ($20 billion) on yen-selling intervention and other measures.

Tokyo fears the strong yen will hurt its key export industries, making Japanese goods more expensive overseas and eroding foreign earnings in yen terms.

The central bank first intervened in the Tokyo market on Sept. 17 after the dollar fell to the 116-yen level.

The greenback was quoted at 120.36 yen at 3 p.m. (0600 GMT), compared with 120.25 yen in New York Monday afternoon. It was up from 119.63-66 yen in Tokyo late Monday.

An original G7 finance ministers' meeting gathering scheduled for the end of last month was postponed after the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank on Sept. 29-30 were cancelled in the wake of the terrorism.

Policymakers of the G7—Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States—usually meet on the sidelines of those meetings.

Analysts said US Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill was likely to call on Shiokawa to speed up Japan's bad loan disposal during their planned bilateral meeting on the sidelines of this weekend's G7 meeting in Washington.

"The US side is largely seen to call on Japan to dispose of bad loans quickly and achieve economic recovery, which will eventually help boost the US economy," Mitsubishi's Goto said. *AFP*

Job cuts in Internet sector dropped to 15-month low

WASHINGTON—The torrent of job losses in the Internet sector eased off in September as the number of cuts fell to a 15-month low, an industry survey showed Monday.

Job losses fell to 2,986, the lowest figure since the start of the job-cutting spree in July 2000, said a survey by outplacement firm Challenger, Gray and Christmas.

A total 126,898 jobs have been axed in the 15 months to the end of September, it said.

"The dot.com sector may be stabilizing, which would account for the decline in job-cut announcements," said the firm's chief executive, John Challenger.

"Many of the weakest firms no longer exist and those once considered the titans of the Internet are trimming payroll and other costs to the minimum," he said in a statement.

The Internet still provided business opportunities as the number of people with access increased.

"As a result, we will continue to see job growth in this area but it probably will never again match the explosive growth of a couple of years ago," Challenger said.

The September job cuts were 39 percent down from the 4,899 reported in August and 38 percent down from September 2000, the firm said.

The total number of job losses in the Internet sector so far this year was 90,781, sharply up from 16,289 in the same period a year earlier, the survey showed.

"As in the old economy, the businesses that survive the idea stage are going to have to prove that there is a need for their services, that the service works and that it will eventually make a profit," said John Challenger.

"For a while, it seemed all that was needed was an innovative idea, no matter how far-fetched it was, and investors and employees would flock to you." *AFP*

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Europe confident on growth

PARIS—The European Central Bank and Germany on Monday fired a double-barreled shot of optimism at the European economy, aiming to ward off a slump in confidence after last month's terrorist attacks in the United States.

The comments by ECB vice president Christian Noyer and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder echoed a determined drive by many top European officials to counter the most-feared effect of the Sept. 11 attacks: weakness in consumer confidence.

Noyer declared there was no real threat of recession in Europe and predicted a recovery this autumn, despite mounting signs of negative economic growth.

"There are no serious reasons to forecast a recession," Noyer said in an interview with the French newspaper Liberation.

However, as he spoke, the French Socialist Party, which leads behind the government, called for measures to support activity.

Noyer of the ECB was quoted by the newspaper as saying that "we have good reasons to believe that the recovery in Europe will happen this autumn."

Planned tax cuts in several euro-zone countries and reduced inflation pressures would enable the economy to quickly pick up from the temporary drop in consumer spending, he said.

"Obviously, the short-term impact is clear; it is certain that over a period of a few days and probably for several weeks, consumers have been affected, especially in the United States," Noyer said.

"But one should not make definitive conclusions based on statistics from the month of September only. I think that fundamental factors will overcome one-time events, as historical experience has shown," he said. *AFP*

Opec oil price still below target

VIENNA—The basket oil price used by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) to set its output remained below the $22 floor of the cartel's target range for a fifth trading day in a row, its secretariat said on Monday.

Under a price mechanism system aimed at keeping prices within a $22-$28 range, Opec could cut production by 500,000 barrels a day if the basket price remains below $22 a barrel for 10 trading days in a row.

The basket price, an average of seven world crudes, rose slightly to $20.99 dollars on Friday, said Opec officials, who base the daily basket price on the previous working day's crude prices around the world.

Opec ministers agreed at a meeting in Vienna last week to leave output unchanged, but signaled they would cut output in the coming weeks if oil prices remained weak.

The basket price slumped to two-year lows last week amid forecasts of slumping demand for oil as the global economy slows further in the wake of last month's terror attacks in the United States.

At the end of last week oil prices rebounded as traders mulled comments from the Opec oil cartel suggesting that, although it had not cut output, it would not allow prices to collapse. *AFP*

Sony slashes profit forecast

TOKYO—Japanese electronics giant Sony Corp. vowed Monday to maintain its level of activity despite slashing its profit forecast partly due to last month's terrorist attacks in the United States.

"We revised (our forecast) downwards because of terrorism so it is kind of making an impact," Sony chair and chief executive Nobuyuki Idei said. "But we are trying to maintain our current level of activity as much as possible."

On Friday, Sony revised downward its net profit forecast to 10 billion yen ($83.9 million) for the year to March 2002 from its earlier estimate of 90 billion yen.

Sony said the downward revision was mainly due to a worsening of results in the electronics business and the expected impact of the terrorist attacks on the US and Japanese economies.

Apart from the Sept. 11 attacks by hijacked planes on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Idei said the global downturn in the information technology (IT) sector was "more of an influence" on business.

"The IT industry is horizontal. If you are in a horizontal layer you cannot control your destiny," he told a news conference.

"You cannot hedge the risk of the shrinking of the IT industry," he said, adding the Japanese IT sector was "much healthier than the Japanese financial sector," which had been stricken with a mountain of bad debt and disintegrating profits. *AFP*

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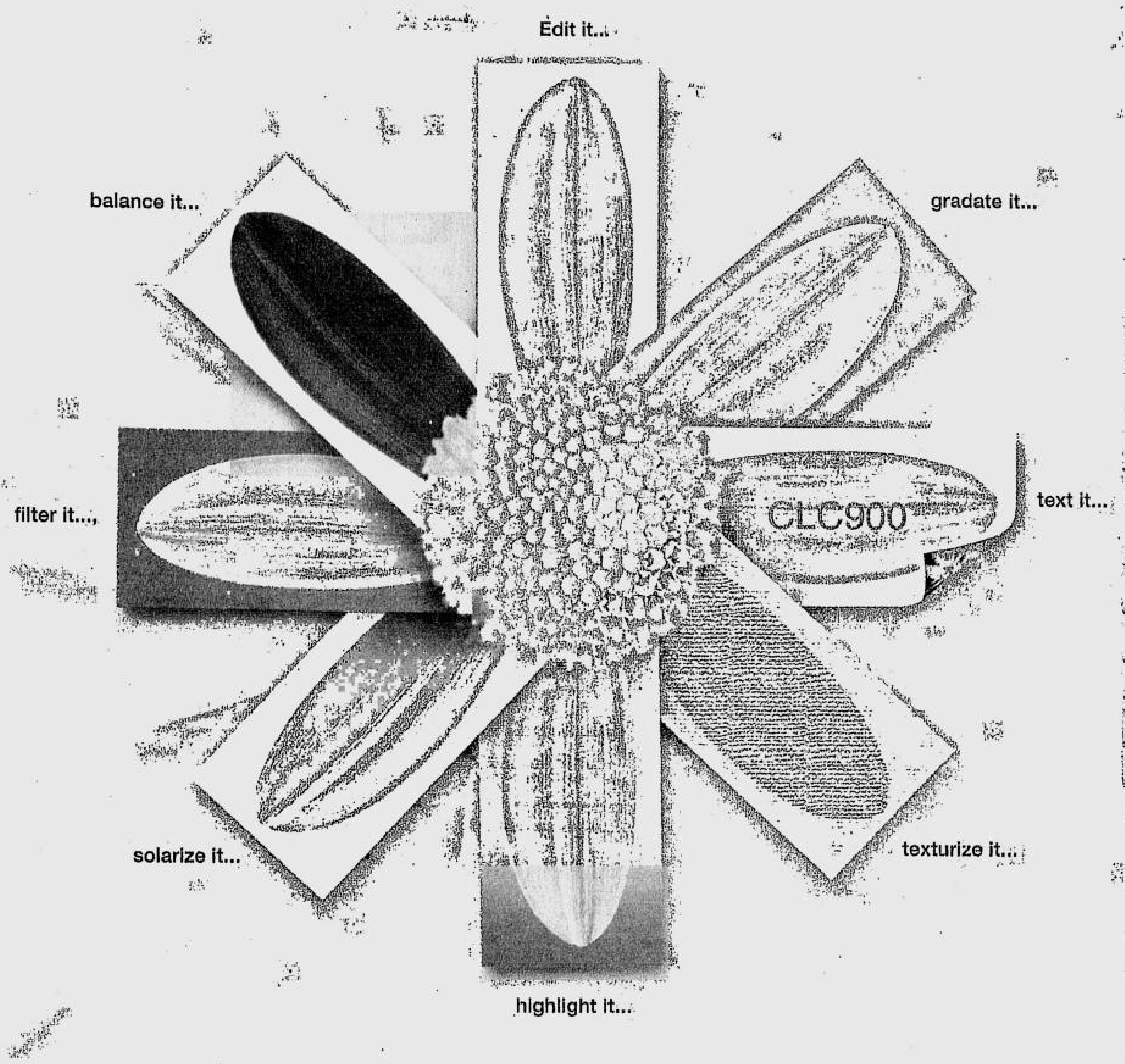
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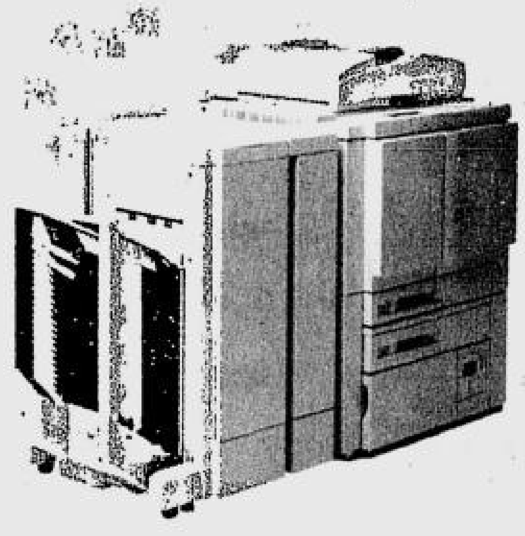

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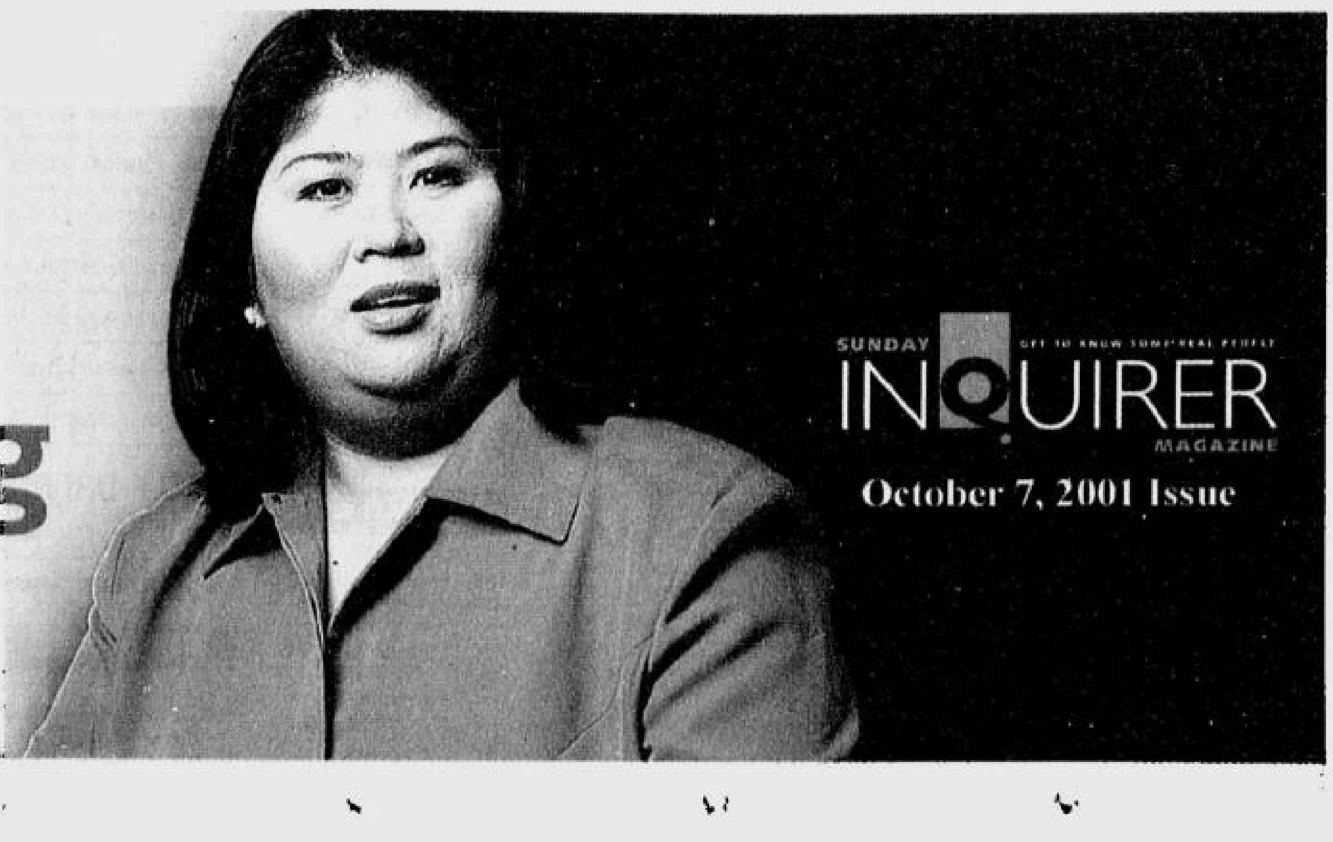

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Notice is given that the estate of the late SANDRA P. NIETES has been extrajudicially settled among her heirs as per Doc#134; Page#28; Book#XLV; Series of 2001 under Atty. Perfecto L. Dimayuga, Notary Public, Makati City.
(PDI-Oct. 3,10 & 17, 2001)

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Estate of Lolita N. Alcantara was extrajudicially settled by the heirs per Doc. # 330, Page # 67, Book # XI, Series of 2001 of Notary Public for Pasig City, Eutacio V. Flores. (PDI-Sept. 19, 26 & Oct. 3, 2001)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late PASTOR A. KIMPO, JR. was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc No. 543, Page No. 115, Book No. I, Series of 2001 Before Notary Public Atty. Al-Flo C. Nilooban of Las Pinas City (PDI-Oct. 3, 10, & 17 2001)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the deceased BERNARDINO & NATIVIDAD BUENAVENTURA has been extrajudicially settled by their heirs on Sept.. 25, 2001 as per Doc. No. 406; Page No. 83; Book No. 68; Series of 2001 of notary public Rizal Meru of Mla. (PDI-Sept. 26, Oct. 3 & 10, 2001)

Notice is hereby given that the intestate estate of the late Violeta C. Lavides - Buenaventura was settled extrajudicially by her heirs on Sept. 22, 2001 and appears as Doc. No. 148, Page No. 30, Book No. 290, Series of 2001, of Notary Public for the City of Pasig Lucila M. Lawas-Yutoc (PDI -Sept. 26, Oct. 3 & 10, 2001)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Official Receipt Nos. 3000-3050 under the name of LUCAS WELL DRILLING AND WATER SUPPLY at Alabang Muntinlupa.

Republic of the Philippines
SENATE
Pasay City

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

The Senate of the Philippines invites all eligible bidders to prequalify and to bid for the year 2002 services to wit:

A. PUBLIC BIDDING	B. SEALED BIDDING (2nd INVITATION)
PRINTING & BINDING OF THE "RECORD OF THE SENATE" a) Vol. I, First Regular Session, Eleventh Congress covering the period July 27 to September 29, 1998 (200 cps. with 832 pages/copy)	1. Garbage Disposal
b) Vol. IV, Third Regular Session, Tenth Congress covering the period January 20 to February 20 and May 25, 1998 (200 cps. with 1,527 pages/copy)	2. Rental of Drinking Fountains 3. Sanitizers/Deodorizers
c) Vol. II, Second Regular Session, Tenth Congress covering the period January 20 to June 5 (PM), 1997 (200 cps. with 676 pages/copy)	4. Subscription to Cable TV 5. Supply of Flowers

Prospective bidders for the PUBLIC BIDDING may obtain the prequalification requirements at the PBAC Secretariat Office, Room 401, Senate of the Philippines, GSIS Building, Pasay City from **8-12 October 2001.** Deadline for the submission of complete and duly accomplished prequalification documents shall be on **15 October 2001.** Incomplete requirements will not be entertained. The pre-bidding conferences and bidding schedules shall be announced to all prequalified bidders.

All bids under the public bidding category must be accomplished by a bid bond equivalent to five percent (5%) of the total bid price or Php 10,000 **whichever is higher** in the form of cash, manager's check, cashier's check, or surety bond. All surety bonds must be callable on demand. **Late bids will be rejected.**

Bidders participating in the SEALED BIDDING may secure requirements from the Property and Procurement Services (PPS) located at Room 401, Senate of the Philippines, Pasay City from **8-12 October 2001.** Schedule of conferences for services under the same category if any, will be announced later including the deadline for the dropping of bids.

Winning bidders from both categories shall post a performance bond in the form of cash, manager's check, cashier's check, or surety bond equivalent to fifteen percent (15%) of the total contract price. For prepaid contracts, the performance bond shall be equivalent to one hundred percent (100%).

THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES RESERVES THE RIGHT TO CONFISCATE THE BID BOND AND/OR PURSUE APPROPRIATE LEGAL ACTION SHOULD THE WINNING BIDDER REFUSE TO ACCEPT THEIR AWARD, AND TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS OR ANY PART THEREOF WITHOUT OFFERING ANY REASON, WAIVE ANY DEFECTS CONTAINED THEREIN, AND ACCEPT THE OFFER MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE GOVERNMENT.

FURTHER, THE SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES ASSUMES NO OBLIGATION WHATSOEVER TO COMPENSATE OR INDEMNIFY THE BIDDER FOR ANY EXPENSE OR LOSS THAT THEY MAY INCUR IN PARTICIPATING IN THIS UNDERTAKING NOR DOES IT GUARANTEE THAT AN AWARD WILL BE MADE.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. ARNEL JOSE S. BAÑAS**
Chairman, Prequalification, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – Oct. 3, 4 & 5, 2001)

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Ninoy Aquino International Airport, Metro Manila

INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION/ELIGIBILITY AND BIDDING

The Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) invites interested bidders to submit Application for Prequalification or Eligibility and subsequently to bid, if qualified for the hereunder project:

1. Name of Project : ASIA Development Project Phase III (Aviation Support Industrial Area)
2. Contract Budget : Php 9,175,997.92
3. Minimum Requirements :
    1. PCAB License Category : A General Building
    2. IAC License Category : Medium B for Buildings
    3. 5 years experience in construction of building

Forms for application for Prequalification/Eligibility may be secured from the Office of the Assistant General Manager for Operations, 2nd Floor, MIAA Administration Building, NAIA, Pasay City from **October 8-12, 2001** upon presentation of Letter of Intent. Deadline for the submission of duly accomplished Pre-qualification/Eligibility Form shall be on **October 19, 2001.**

Official Bid Documents will be issued only to pre-qualified contractors upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00) for the project. The time and date of the submission and opening of bids, pre-bid conference/s and other affairs concerning the project shall be announced and confirmed in the Notice of Pre-qualification.

The MIAA reserves the right to reject any or all bids duly received, waive any minor defect in the proposals, accept the offer that will be evaluated to be the most advantageous to the Authority nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. JOSE N. GO, JR.**
Chairman, BAC-1

(PDI - Sept. 30, Oct. 3 & 7, 2001)

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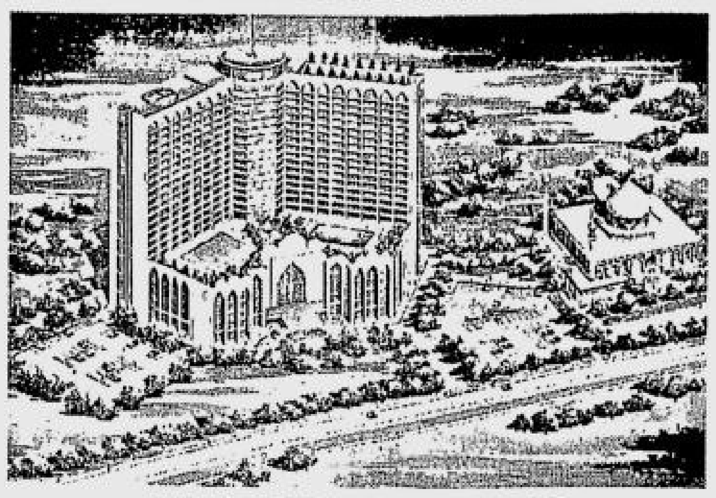

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Attention: Hadji Datu Badrodin L. Mala
BAMRREPAC - Chairman

Pampanga II Electric Cooperative, Inc.
San Roque, Guagua, Pampanga
Tel. Nos. 900-0689, 900-0474
Fax No. (045) 900-0092

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

PELCO II invites suppliers to apply for pre-qualification and if subsequently found qualified to bid for the SUPPLY and DELIVERY, and Construction of:

Package 010-2001: DOE PROJECTS AT BACOLOR
Package 011-2001: DOE PROJECTS AT PORAC
Package 012-2001: DOE PROJECTS AT MABALACAT

The pre-qualification forms may be secured from the PBAC Secretariat, PELCO II Main Office, San Roque, Guagua, Pampanga from **October 8-12, 2001** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of ONE THOUSAND PESOS (P1,000.00). Pre-qualification forms shall be submitted not later than 5:00 p.m. on **October 16, 2001.**

Pre-qualification meeting is scheduled on **October 17, 2001** at 10:00 a.m. at Pelco II Main Building, San Roque, Guagua, Pampanga.

Bidding will be announced later. For additional inquiries, please call the PBAC Secretariat at (045) 900-0474 or 900-0850.

(Sgd.) **ENER D. PANGAN**
Chairman
PELCO II - PBAC

(PDI- Sept. 30, Oct. 3 & 5, 2001)

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Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

AMENDMENT ON COMELEC RESOLUTIONS NO. 4591 AND 4595 RE: CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES AND FILING OF CERTIFICATES OF CANDIDACY IN CONNECTION WITH THE NOVEMBER 26, 2001 AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO.
x ------------------------------------ x

PRESENT:

BENIPAYO, Alfredo L.	Chairman
TANCANGCO, Luzviminda G.	Commissioner
JAVIER, Rufino S.B.	Commissioner
LANTION, Ralph C.	Commissioner
SADAIN, Mehol K.	Commissioner
BORRA, Resurreccion Z.	Commissioner
TUASON, Florentino Jr. A.	Commissioner

Promulgated: 2 October 2001

RESOLUTION NO. 4597

WHEREAS, Comelec Resolutions No. 4591 and 4595, Calendar of Activities and Rules and Regulations Governing the Filing of Certificate of Candidacy in Connection with the November 26, 2001 Elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, respectively, were promulgated on September 25, 2001 and published on September 27, 2001;

WHEREAS, the deadline for filing certificates of candidacy and nominations in said resolutions is set on October 2, 2001;

WHEREAS, due to the limited time between the publication of Comelec Resolutions No. 4591 and 4595 and the deadline for the filing of certificates of candidacy, persons who intend to run for the different positions in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao may not be able to meet the deadline for filing the same;

NOW THEREFORE, the Commission on Elections, by virtue of the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code and other election laws, **RESOLVED** to promulgate, as it hereby promulgates the amendments to Resolution No. 4591 and Section 5 of Resolution No. 4595 as follows:

SECTION 1. Deadline for filing of Certificate of Candidacy. - Resolution No. 4591 is hereby amended to read as follows:

Date/Period	Activities	Prohibited Acts Covered/involved
October 9, 2001 (Tuesday)	Last day to file Certificate of Candidacy	

Section 5 of Comelec Resolution No. 4595 is hereby amended to read as follows:

> "Section 5. Period of filing of certificate of candidacy. - The certificate of candidacy shall be filed beginning September 27, 2001 up to October 9, 2001."

SEC. 2. Effectivity. - This resolution shall take effect on the day following its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

SEC 3. Dissemination. - The Education and Information Department shall cause the publication of this resolution, and furnish copies thereof to all field offices of the Commission in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao as well as the President or Secretary General of all registered political parties.

SO ORDERED.

ALFREDO L. BENIPAYO
Chairman

LUZVIMINDA G. TANCANGCO
Commissioner

RUFINO S.B. JAVIER
Commissioner

RALPH C. LANTION
Commissioner

MEHOL K. SADAIN
Commissioner

RESURRECCION Z. BORRA
Commissioner

FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR.
Commissioner

(PDI – Oct. 3, 2001)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OBITUARIES

"Precious in the sight of the Lord
is the death of His saints."
Ps. 116:15

AVELINO M. ATIENZA, D.V.M.

Peacefully joined our Creator on 1 October 2001 at the age of 54.

His wife **Eleanor**; sons **Amar** and **Exel**; daughter **Jemimah**; daughters-in-law **Salome** and **Jhoanne**; grandchildren **Earl**, **Izec Thea** and **Ethan**; mother **Ester**, aunt **Maria**; mother-in-law **Rosa**; brothers, sisters, relatives and friends request the readers to join them in praise and thanksgiving on the glorious reality that he was finally called home to be with the Lord forever.

His body lies at 95 Premium Street, GSIS Village, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Thursday, October 4, 2001 at 8:30 a.m. at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

"Come
to
Me,
all
you
who
are
weary
and
burdened,
and
I will
give
you
rest."
Mat. 11:28

DIONISIO CANLAS PINEDA

Of Teresa Heights Novaliches, Q.C.

Peacefully joined our Lord on September 30, 2001

His bereaved family; children **Eddie** and **Norma**, **Ogan** and **Zeny**, **Edna** and **Nel**, **Ellen** and **Ralph** and **Dong**; grandchildren **Richard** and **Cathy**, **Ching** and **Ram**, **Popo** and **Che-Che**, **Jerome** and **Joshua**; great grandchildren **Miggy** and **Ryne**; request pious readers, friends and relatives to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the family residence at #7 Silangan Street, Teresa Heights, Novaliches, Q.C.

Interment will be on Saturday, October 6, 2001 at the Holy Cross Memorial Park after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at the Teresa Heights Parish Church.

"My soul finds rest to God alone;
from Him comes my salvation."
Psalms 62:2

PROF. THERESITA BARBA PURUGGANAN-GONZALES

Peacefully joined her Creator on October 01, 2001 at the age of 65.

Her remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe. Interment will be at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City on Thursday, October 04, 2001 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

MARIE OLIVERA FALLORE

of Sapian, Capiz and Muntinlupa City

Peacefully joined her Creator on September 29, 2001 at the age of 77.

Her loving husband **FRISCO**; children **Boy**, **Lolet**, **June**, **Girlie**, **Cesar** and **Ching**; sister **Rosario**; daughters-in-law **Pearlie**, **Baby** and **Naty**; son-in-law **Boogie**; grandchildren **Bryan**, **Mike**, **Dennis**, **Chummy**, **Melvin**, **Donnie** and **Dodie**, **Irene**, **Paulo** and **Marvin**; other relatives and friends request the readers to join them in praying for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at their residence #5 Cattleya St., JPA Subdivision, Muntinlupa City.

Interment will be on Saturday, October 6, 2001 after 9:00 a.m. Mass at Everest Hills Memorial Park, Susana Heights, Muntinlupa City.

"When we are called to part from those
we hold in love,
but we shall still be joined in heart,
and hope to meet above."

Leonora Flores Udarbe

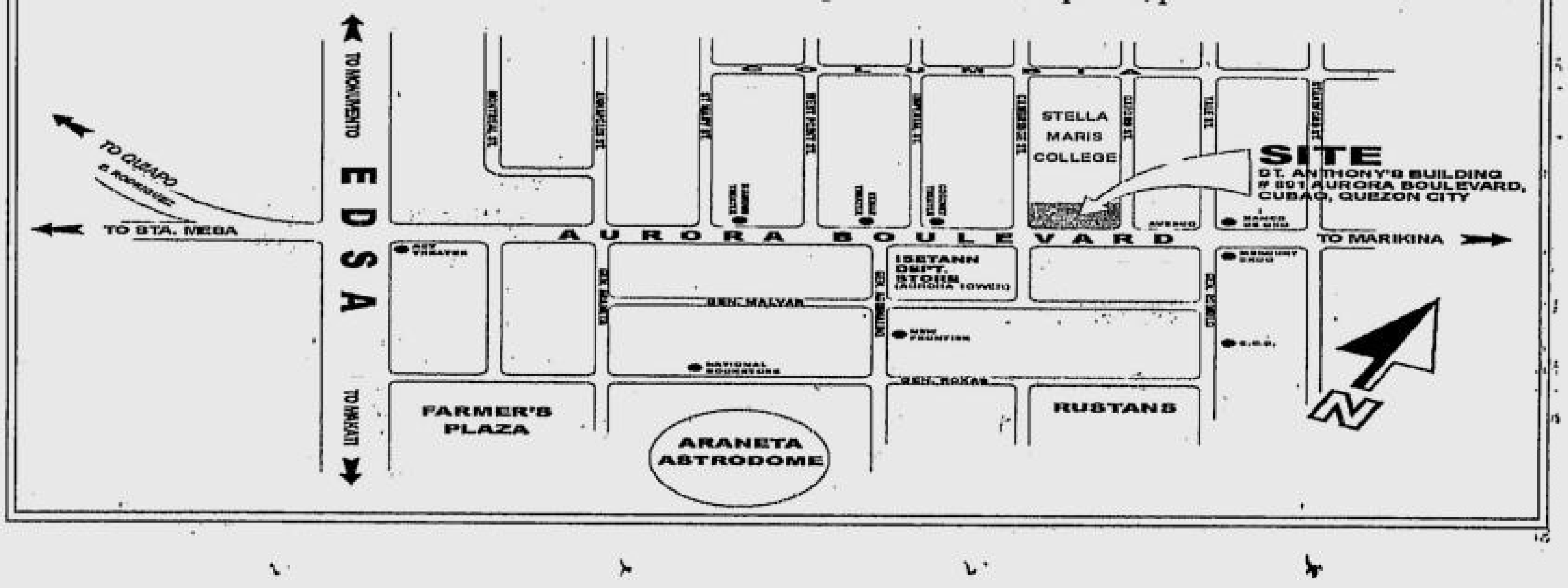
Born on September 22, 1924
And died peacefully in the Grace
of the Lord on October 1, 2001

Her beloved husband **Proceso**; children **Karl** and **Cora**, **Margie** and **Gus**, **Marc** and **Joy**; grandchildren **Krissy** and **Lauren**, **Andrew** and **Simon**; and her many **Udarbe** and **Flores** relatives mourn her passing from her earthly life, but rejoice in her continuing risen life with Christ.

Funeral rites will be held in Silliman University Church, Dumaguete City at 3 PM on Saturday, October 6, 2001.

INQUIRER CLASSIFIEDS

Aurora branch is now open to serve your Classified Ads requirements. For inquiries, please call **912-9008** to **11**.



His memory lives on in our hearts.

In Loving Memory on the
First Death Anniversary of

Jesus Ernesto R. Sibal

JULY 3, 1943–OCTOBER 3, 2000

We, SIBS Publishing House, Inc.'s stockholders, directors, officers, and employees, solemnly remember our founder and president, Jesus Ernesto Sibal, on his first death anniversary.

He is greatly missed for his leadership style, impeccable ethical standard, and pioneering efforts in publishing high-quality textbooks. His legacy of excellence in the textbook publishing industry and dedication and strong commitment to his employees are imprinted in our lives.

To all of us whose lives he had touched, Sir Jesse will always be an inspiration to strive for excellence, work harder, and carry on with vigor what he had started as a noble mission: to raise the quality of education by providing quality textbooks for the Filipino schoolchildren.

We request the pious readers to join us in prayers that the Lord may bring him to the happiness of life in His presence.

SIBS
PUBLISHING HOUSE, INC.
Helping the Teachers of Today Educate the Leaders of Tomorrow!

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Jesus Ernesto R. Sibal

July 3, 1943-October 3, 2000

On the occasion of his first death anniversary,
the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be offered
at the following churches:

✷ **Our Lady of Lourdes Church** ....5:30 A.M.
Punta Princesa, Cebu City

✷ **Virgen dela Regla Church** ....5:30 A.M.
Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu

✷ **Cebu Metropolitan Cathedral** ....5:30 A.M.
P. Burgos St., Cebu City

✷ **Christ the King Church** ....6:00 A.M.
Green Meadows, Quezon City

✷ **Immaculate Conception Church** ....6:00 A.M.
Lantana St., Cubao, Quezon City

✷ **Sacred Heart Church** ....6:00 A.M.
Scout Ybardolaza, Kamuning, Quezon City

✷ **Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church** ....6:00 A.M.
New Manila, Quezon City

✷ **St. Paul the Apostle Church** ....6:00 A.M.
Mother Ignacia corner Timog Avenue, Quezon City

✷ **Our Lady of Lourdes Church** ....6:00 A.M.
Kanlaon St., La Loma, Quezon City

✷ **Redemptorist Church** ....6:00 A.M.
R. Aboitiz Street, Cebu City

✷ **Basilica del Sto. Niño** ....6:00 A.M.
Osmeña Boulevard, Cebu City

✷ **Santuario de San Antonio** ....6:15 A.M.
McKinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City

✷ **Sto. Rosario Church** ....6:30 A.M.
P. del Rosario St., Cebu City

✷ **Our Lady of EDSA** ....6:30 A.M.
Ortigas Avenue corner EDSA, Quezon City

✷ **St. John Bosco Parish** ....6:30 A.M.
Arnaiz St., Makati City

SIBS
PUBLISHING HOUSE, INC.
Helping the Teachers of Today Educate the Leaders of Tomorrow!

We request the readers to offer prayers that the Lord may give him the unending joy of His love in the company of all the saints.

ISO 9000
PSB

exel

BEST
EMPLOYERS
IN ASIA
2001

**EXEL Philippines, Inc.
proudly announces the
Grand Opening of**

EXEL GLOBAL LOGISTICS, INC
PEZA Facilities Enterprise

Today, the 3rd of October 2001

at

**Block 2 Lot 3, Solid Street
Laguna International Industrial Park, PEZA
Mamplasan, Biñan, Laguna**

Exel is one of the world's largest dedicated supply chain companies with well-developed capabilities throughout the Americas, Europe and Asia to support globalization, supply chain integration and market expansion.

Our workforce, now over 55,000 strong, delivers local implementation through a global structure, providing consistent processes and world-class solutions across the globe.

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APL

Philippine Airlines

MIGGY & FAELLA
TRUCKING

SINGAPORE AIRLINES

FPS Famous Pacific Forwarding Phils., Inc.

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ZOPADWEN

VICOR TRANSPORT CORPORATION

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SOUTHERN LION ENTERPRISES

*SHEENETH
TRANSPORT
SERVICES*

*SAGAWA
EXPRESS
PHILIPPINES,
INC.*

SPRINT Freight
Express,
Inc.

SPECIAL PROJECT

OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF ASCENDAS PHILIPPINES CORPORATION

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Assistant Editor

LITA PASCUAL, Account Manager

MY WARMEST greetings and congratulations to the men and women of Ascendas Philippines Corporation on the launching of their company.

In today's challenging times, we need people and institutions that can spearhead and set the direction for transformation. We are in need of organizations that can lead in propelling socio-economic growth and development and not merely conform to the challenging economic situation. We thus welcome the launching of your company merged from two equally remarkable organizations that have significantly contributed to the local economy.

As we have anchored our agenda for social and economic rebuilding behind a dynamic private sector and competitive core industries, I am confident that the establishment of your new company will have a substantial impact to this end. With your resolve to strive for excellence, you inspire and send a clear message to others that with commitment to innovation and service, success is truly within reach.

You exemplify the type of people that our country needs. By deciding to put up your office here, you are already registering your support to our government's developmental efforts. May you continue to do so as many invaluable partner of progress and modernization.

Thank you again and more power.

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

OUR warmest greetings and congratulations to the management and staff of Ascendas (Philippines) Corporation on the launching of your Philippine operations on September 18 towards serving as one of the country's foremost provider of total business space solutions such as ready-built and built-in facilities in the CALABARZON area.

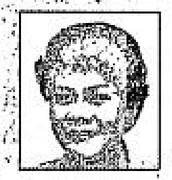
We are pleased to welcome this latest addition to the country's expanding list of developers of industrial estates and parks in our search for ways to attract the much needed foreign investments that can generate income and employment opportunities for Filipino manpower especially in the countryside.

By providing investors with world-class venues for their factories and plants equipped with the necessary infrastructure facilities, we put them in at a vantage position to attain profitability in their operations – a result that would attest to the overseas business community that the Philippines is, indeed a feasible platform for overseas production.

As a subsidiary of Ascendas Pte. Ltd. of Singapore, Ascendas (Philippines) Corporation is a shining testimony to what Philippine-Singaporean cooperation can achieve in the area of investments and industrial development for the mutual benefit of two Asean economies and their respective business communities.

Mabuhay and best wishes for success.

MAR ROXAS
Secretary
Department of Trade and Industry



EARLY this year, we witnessed the merger of Singapore's two leading international industrial property developers, JTC International's (JTCI) Business Parks and Facilities Group, and Arcasia Land, into a new business entity called Ascendas Pte Ltd. This merger combines the strengths and capabilities of Asia's two foremost business space solutions providers and thus creates new opportunities and stronger competitive advantage for their Asian clients.

Today, I extend my warmest congratulations to the formal launching in the Philippines of Ascendas (Philippines) Corporation. Ascendas provides the extra intensity in its continuing successful partnership with Carmelray Industrial Corporation particularly their 148-hectares Carmelray Industrial Park II Special Economic Zone Project in Calamba, Laguna.

The Philippine Economic Zone Authority takes pride in having a development partner like Ascendas that is dedicated to the ideals of excellence and valued service.

Again, my congratulations and mabuhay.

LILIA B. DE LIMA
Director General
PEZA

CONGRATULATIONS on the launch of Ascendas Philippines, I am delighted to welcome Ascendas Singapore on the inauguration of its subsidiary in the Philippines. It is a sign of confidence in this country. It is a signal that Ascendas is looking for even more business opportunities. And I am confident that there will be greater success ahead.

Ascendas' flagship project in the Philippines, the Carmelray Industrial Park II, has grown to become a symbol of successful Singaporean-Filipino cooperation. It has become a symbol of what the best of the Philippines and the best of Singapore can do together; in this instance, a fully-integrated industrial estate where investors can avail of everything they need – clean water, quality electricity, state of the art telecommunications and excellent support services. The ready-built factories, a result of much needed capital put in by Ascendas Singapore, have facilitated many foreign investors to locate in Carmelray.

Indeed, Ascendas has played an important role in promoting economic ties between the Philippines and Singapore. Ascendas' presence in the Philippines has helped, both directly and indirectly, to encourage and facilitate the subsequent entries of and investments by many Singapore and non-Singapore companies, including Tri-M, Matsushita, Franke and Alcoa. Ascendas' presence in the country is a beacon for international businesses and investors, and its continued drive to promote the Philippines worldwide through its international marketing offices in the United States, Japan and Europe sends a strong signal that the Philippines is a good place for business and investment.

More generally, may I say that this is has been an excellent year in terms of economic cooperation between Singapore and the Philippines. I am pleased to highlight that, of the investments approved by the Board of Investments in the first seven months of this year, Singapore has emerged as the country's top foreign investor. And for the whole of last year, Singapore has emerged as the Philippines' third largest trading partner.

Once again, congratulations and best wishes to Ascendas Philippine.

JACKY FOO
Ambassador
Embassy of Singapore

IT GIVES me great pleasure to celebrate the official launch of Ascendas (Philippines) Corporation. I would like to thank everyone who has supported us in one way or another in the successful development of our first project in the Philippines, Carmelray Industrial Park II. It has encouraged us to play a greater role here because we regard the Philippines as an important growth market in Asia.

To date, Ascendas has invested a total of US$56 million in the Phase One development of CIP II. I am proud to say that it has set standards as the only PEZA Economic Zone in the country to be equipped with complete underground fiber-optic facilities and a dedicated power plant. Its unrivalled combination of quality infrastructure, amenities and professional estate management services, has enabled the park to attract locators at an average of one every month – a record which no other park in the country can compare with.

Today, it is the top privately owned economic zone in terms of number of PEZA-approved projects. It has, to date, 35 locators, who have invested a total of US$152 million and employing a community of over 3,000 people. The ready-built and build-to-suit facilities in phase one are already 90% occupied, and this has spurred development into the second phase.

With the country in the capable hands of the Arroyo administration, we see wider scope for Ascendas as a provider of total business space solutions to strongly support the entry of new investments to the Philippines. We are now looking at opportunities for further investments in the country. With your government encouraging investments in IT and e-services, we note that the Philippines is increasingly sought after as an outsourcing center for IT services such as data entry and processing, and call center operations. In 1999, we introduced ready-built facilities to the Philippines at CIP II, offering for the first time, the concept of hassle-free, low-risk, quick start-up operations to investors. Today, it is a concept that has taken off, especially with speedy time-to-market as a key success factor for businesses.

The convenience of a quick start-up has been tested many times here at CIP II, with pleasing results. For instance in January this year, we enabled Franke Contract Group, a Swiss MNC, to set up their operations in the park in a record time of 5 months.

Beyond the four walls and a roof, we customize a bundle of solutions to suit the customers' needs. Our solutions range from design, project management, financial arrangements and more, to resolve all their location needs.

We are in business only because of our customers. It is therefore only appropriate that we share our celebration with our customers. It remains for me to thank the government agencies, our partners, business associates and not least, all our valued locators, for their strong support. We will continue in our offerings to deliver a delightful experience.

Thank you and Mabuhay!

Chong Siak Ching
President/CEO
Ascendas Pte Ltd

MABUHAY! It is with great honour and pride that we announce and celebrate the official launch of our new corporate name and identity in the Philippines.

We have been operating in the Philippines under our previous name, JTCi Development Corporation since 1999. With the synergistic merger between JTC International's Business Parks & Facilities Group and Arcasia Land in Singapore, we have changed our name to Ascendas Philippines Corporation. Our parent company, Ascendas Pte Ltd has a well-established track record as a global partner in providing total business space solutions and is wholly owned by Singapore's JTC Corporation.

Over the last few years, Ascendas Philippines has successfully developed the Carmelray Industrial Park II in Calamba, Laguna together with our joint venture partner, Carmelray Industrial Corporation; pioneered the concept of ready built and built-to-suit facilities through our affiliated company, RBF Development Corporation; and developed the dedicated 21 MW power plant in CIP II.

These were achievable because of the steadfast support given and joint efforts contributed by the Filipino government, the people, our clients, tenants, business partners and staff.

As we explore new business opportunities in the Philippines, we look forward to your continued support.

Thank you.

LOH MEOW CHONG
Chief Executive Officer
Ascendas (Philippines) Corporation

Business space solutions provider Ascendas poised for expansion in the Philippines

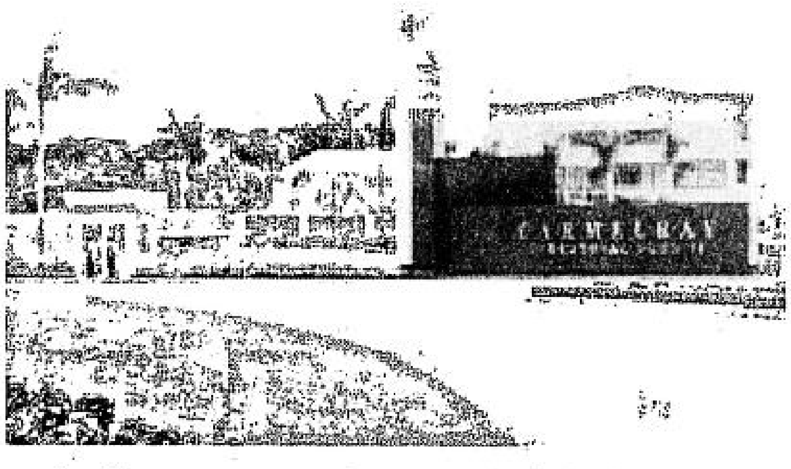
ASCENDAS widens scope to develop facilities for IT and e-service businesses and goes ahead with more ready-built facilities at Carmelray Industrial Park II

Singapore-based Ascendas aims to expand its role in the Philippines as a provider of total business space solutions, particularly to offer ready-built and build-to-suit facilities for IT and e-service industries.

At the official launch of its Philippines country office on 18 September 2001 at the NBC Tent, the Fort in Fort Bonifacio, Ascendas Philippines Corporation (APC) also revealed plans for further development of ready-built and build-to-suit facilities at its Philippine flagship project, Carmelray Industrial Park II (CIP II).

Gracing the launch ceremony of APC was Guests-of-Honor, Honorable Greg A. Domingo, the Philippine Trade and Industry Undersecretary and Honorable Jacky Foo, Ambassador from the Republic of Singapore.

Ms. Chong Siak Ching, President/CEO of Ascendas Pte Ltd, said "APC is looking at opportunities for further investments in the Philippines. With the Philippine government encouraging investments in IT and e-services, the country is increasingly sought after as an outsourcing center for IT services such as data entry and processing, and call center operations."



"Since early this year, we have been receiving enquiries to help locate business space for call center operations. This is an area where Ascendas will proactively facilitate by offering our high-quality business space solutions."

"Since commercial operations started two years ago, over 90% of the Ready-Built Facilities (RBFs) and Build-to-Suit (BTS) units in phase one are occupied. It has, to date, 35 locators, who have invested a total of US$152 million and employing a community of over 3,000 people. They include PSi Technologies, Miyoshi Technologies, Kyushu Matsushita and Three-Five Systems Pacific.

"Given the strong take-up of our RBFs in CIP II, we will continue to provide additional space in the form of new RBFs, as well as BTS faclities."

Both phases in the entire 145-hectare CIP II will total up to 95 hectares of land space to accommodate industries such as electronics, information technology, chemical, pharmaceutical, automotive, food and beverage and general supporting industries.

Since the beginning of 2001, CIP II has been closing deals at an average of one deal per month, the only PEZA Economic Zone to achieve this record. Between January and September this year, 10 new foreign locators, among them an IT data conversion center and five Japanese manufacturers, one German, one Singaporean and one Malaysian have joined the community in CIP II. The latest is a Japan-Singapore-Philippine joint venture manufacturer L&M Tech. Inc, which just signed up in September.

Said Ms Chong: "Under the capable hands of the Arroyo administration, we see great scope for Ascendas as a business space solutions provider to strongly support the entry of new investments into the Philippines. We will build on our excellent relationships with government agencies here and contribute as a global business space partner to companies as the country moves forward to become an industrial and hi-tech hub."

About CIP II

The only industrial park in the Philippines equipped with fiber-optic facilities, Carmelray Industrial Park II is a joint-venture between Carmelray Industrial Corporation and a Singapore consortium led by Ascendas.

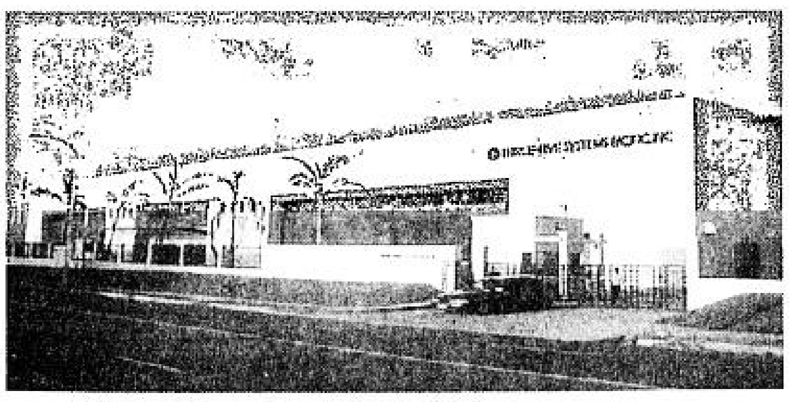
CIP II is a fully integrated development with reliable and quality infrastructure including its own dedicated power plant, estate management services, and supporting amenities and a training centre. The park is the country's top privately-owned economic zone registered with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA).

About Ascendas

Ascendas, the synergistic merger between Arcasia Land and JTC International's (JTCi) Business Parks and Facilities Group, combines a well-established track record as a global partner in providing of total business space solutions. These solutions include the development, management and marketing of science parks, business, high-tech and industrial parks in key markets in Asia, such as Singapore, China, India and the Philippines.

Backed by a strong team of 300 professionals across its key markets, Ascendas has a total of US$700 million (S$1.2 billion) in assets and business environments spread over 1.2 million square metres. Its international clientele of some 1,000 customers include Fortune 500 corporations, multinational corporations, leading local enterprises and research organisations. Ascendas has 8 offices around the world including Singapore, China, India, the Philippines, the United States and Japan.

Our portfolio of properties includes: Singapore Science Parks I, II & III, Kaki Bukit Techparks I & II and Honeywell Building in Singapore; Xinsu Industrial Development (in Suzhou Industrial Park) and Shenzhen Cybercity Business Park in China; International Tech Park Bangalore in India; Nankang Software Park in Taiwan; Bintan Industrial Estate and Batamindo Industrial Park in Indonesia; Vietnam-Singapore Industrial Park in Vietnam and Carmelray Industrial Park II in the Philippines.

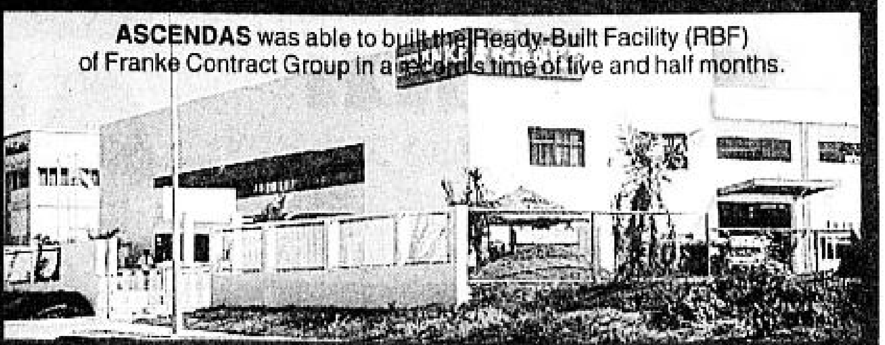


Satisfaction with Ascendas as depicted in the testimonies from our valued customers

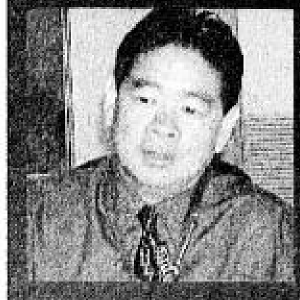
FRANKE CONTRACT GROUP PHILIPPINES, INC.

"We've chosen Carmelray Industrial Park II because it is the most modern, most responsive industrial park available in the Philippines. Ascendas providedus with the option of occupying a Ready-Built Facility, which helps us greatly in short-ing down our start-up time of our new activity in South East Asia."

Balthasar Wicki
Managing Director
Franke Contract Group Asia



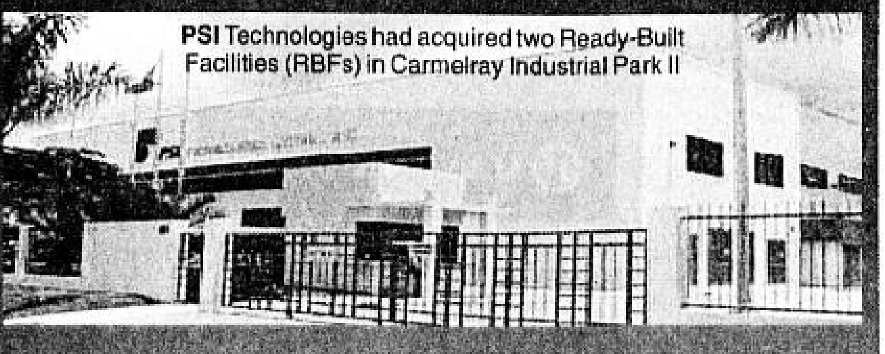
ASCENDAS was able to built the Ready-Built Facility (RBF) of Franke Contract Group in a record's time of five and half months.



PSI TECHNOLOGIES, LAGUNA, INC.

"We liked their ready-built facility and we took it. We are happy with the arrangement because it allows us to respond promptly to market demands. It is important for us to focus on our core business"

Arthur Young, President and CEO
PSI Technologies

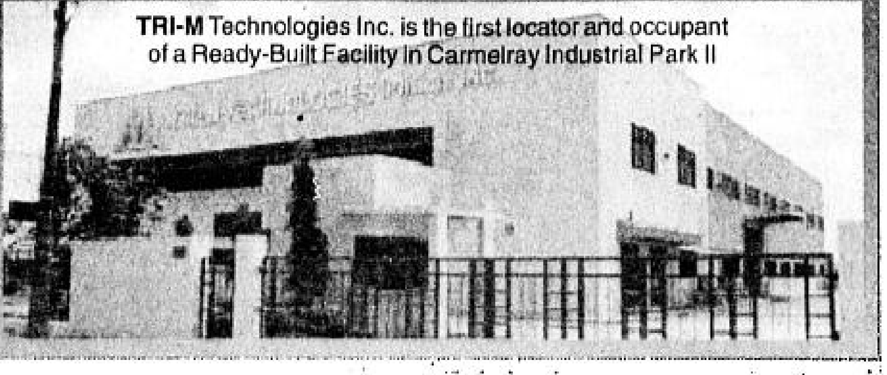


PSI Technologies had acquired two Ready-Built Facilities (RBFs) in Carmelray Industrial Park II

TRI-M TECHNOLOGIES INC.

"Ascendas is a trusted developer and work with us as a partner. Ascendas has helped us greatly during our start-up in the Philippines. It has gone that extra mile to get our business going."

John Chang, General Manager
TRI-M Technologies, Inc.



TRI-M Technologies Inc. is the first locator and occupant of a Ready-Built Facility in Carmelray Industrial Park II

ascendas
A JTC Company

Our Mission

We create total business environments that inspire people to excel.

Our Vision

Ascendas will be Asia's leading provider of innovative business space solutions.

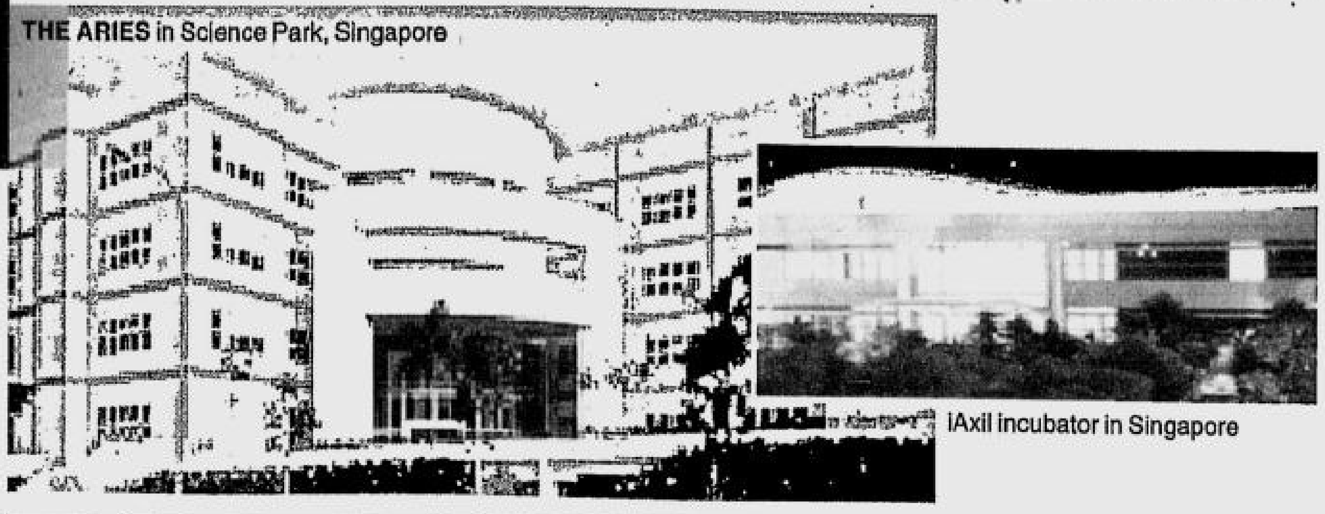
We offer a level of service and quality which stands away above the rest.

We deliver to our customers a satisfying experience, fulfilled career aspirations to our people, shared benefits to our partners and pride and learning, and a reasonable return to our owners.

The Ascendas Promise

Asia's premier business environment host. Leveraging its global experience and regional network. It crafts environments that attract and nurture visionary companies; creates business communities with thriving business partnership; and connects people to a world of resources that enrich business potential.

INTERNATIONAL Technopark Bangalore in India



THE ARIES in Science Park, Singapore

iAxil incubator in Singapore

Congratulations
to the company of
ASCENDAS (PHILIPPINES)
CORPORATION

ascendas
A JTC Company

ON ITS LAUNCHING
THIS
18TH OF SEPTEMBER 2001
FROM

G&W ARCHITECTS
SPECIAL PROJECTS DIVISION
W2305-A West Tower, PSE Center, Exchange Road,
Ortigas Center, Pasig City, Philippines, 1805
Tel. (632) 835-5376 to 77 (632) 637-0234 to 36
Fax. (632) 831-0698 Email: gw_spd@mindgate.net

CARMELRAY INDUSTRIAL PARK II

Carmelray-JTCI Corporation
A joint venture of Carmelray Industrial Corporation
& Ascendas Pte., Ltd.
7th Floor, Rufino Plaza, 6784 Ayala Avenue, Makati City,
Metro Manila, Philippines

Tel.: (632) 817-0193 Fax No.: (632) 817-0193 E-mail:
ecabores@carmelray.com

CONGRATULATIONS
TO
ASCENDAS
(PHILIPPINES)
CORPORATION

GREETINGS FROM:

IRI

INTEGRATED RECYCLING
INDUSTRIES PHILS., INC.

RECLAMATION & RECYCLE OF :
- PRECIOUS METALS
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C4-5B, SEPZ Carmelray Industrial Park II,
Calamba, Laguna Philippines
Tel.: (63) 49-5459571 to 73 Fax: (63) 49-5459570

Congratulations
to the company of

ascendas
A JTC Company

From

OBAYASHI PHILIPPINES

OBAYASHI PHILIPPINES CORPORATION
Unit 606, 6th Floor, Globe Telecom Plaza, Pioneer Highlands Condominium
Pioneer corner Madison Streets, Mandaluyong City
Phone Nos.: 687-7108 • 687-7136 • 687-4290 to 93
Fax Nos. 687-7110

Congratulations
to the company of

ascendas
A JTC Company

From

TAIKISHA PHILIPPINES, INC.
Air Conditioning and Cleanroom Systems
Second floor, Urban Building, 405 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City
Tel. No. 896-3716 Fax Nos. 896-3622 / 3603
Email Address: tpi_mktg@meridiantelekoms.com

"Cleanroom Technology
AT ITS BEST"

Congratulations
to the company of

ASCENDAS (PHIL.) CORPORATION

From

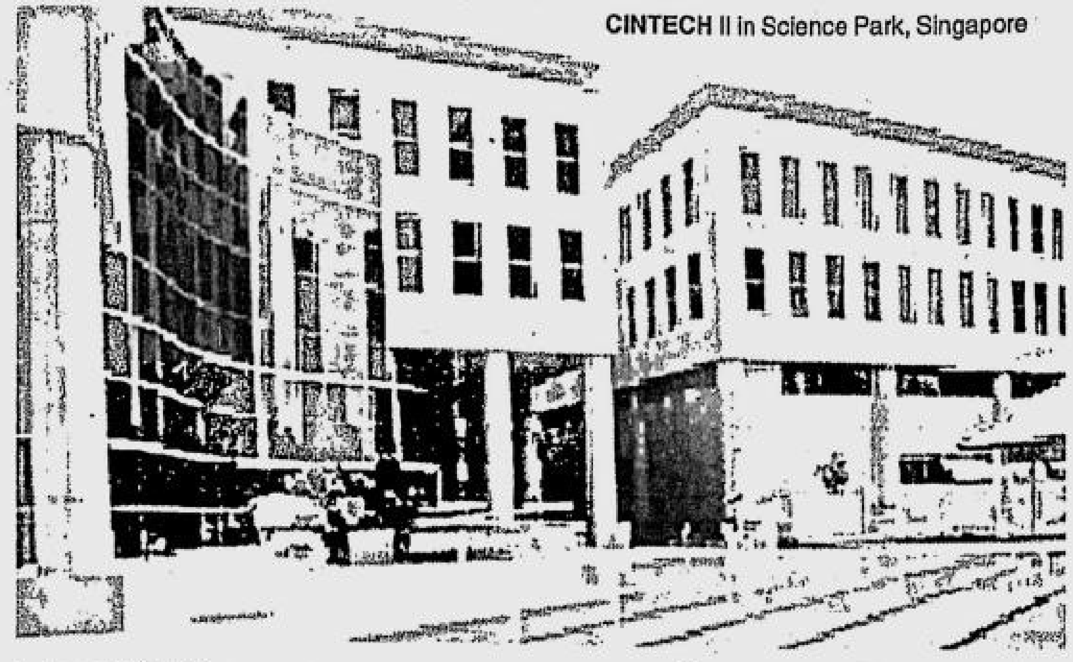
ARCHIPELAGO
BUILDERS

ARCHIPELAGO BUILDERS

GENERAL CONTRACTOR
Lic. No. 184 Category "AAA" Large "B"

29 North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines
Tel. Nos. 926-9056 to 58 / 926-8453 / 926-1326 / 926-7929
Fax No. 922-4320
Email Address:

INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL INSTITUTIONAL
RESIDENTIAL ROAD PROJECTS



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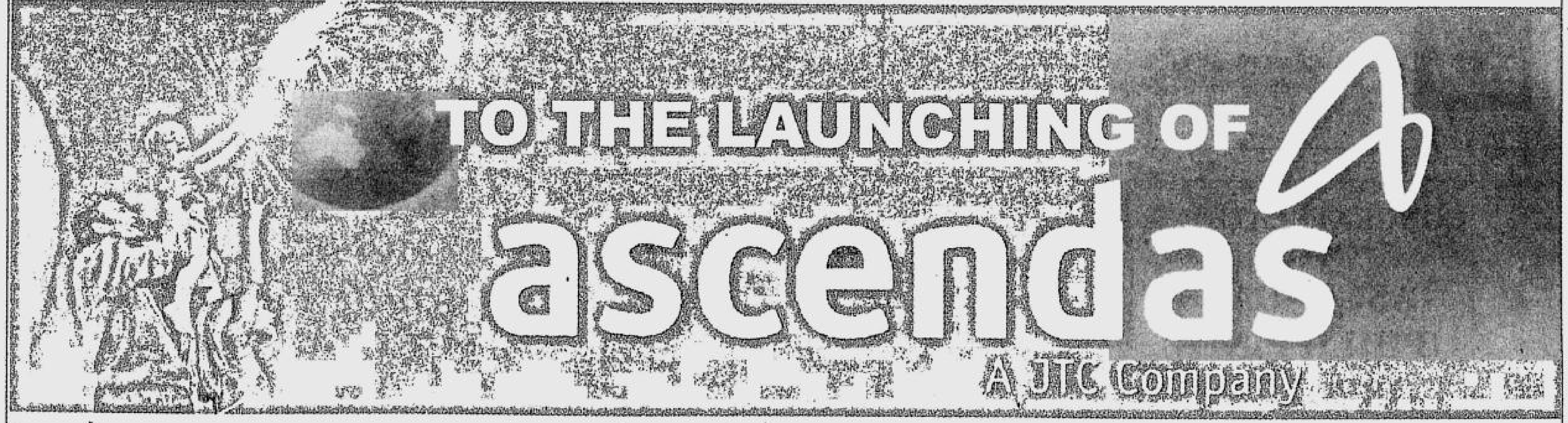

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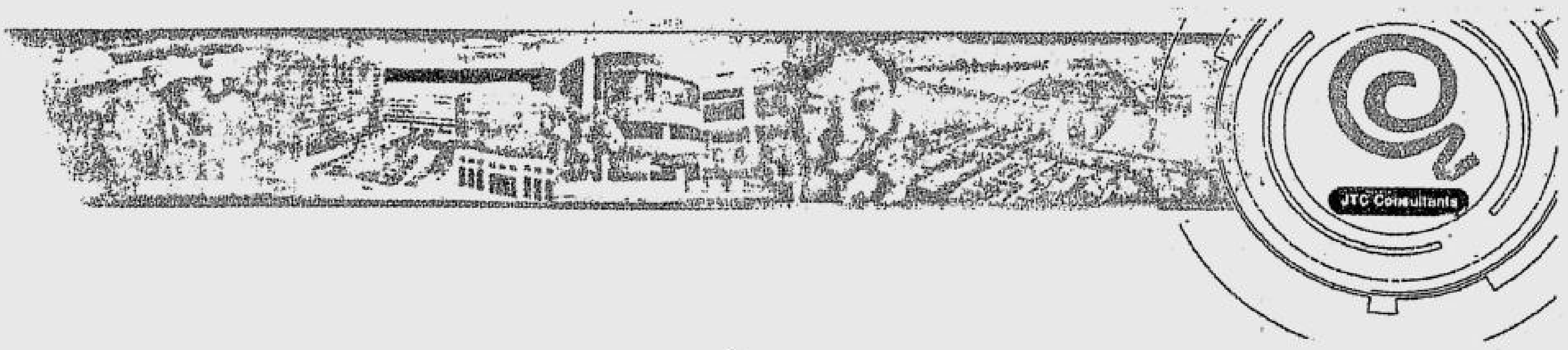

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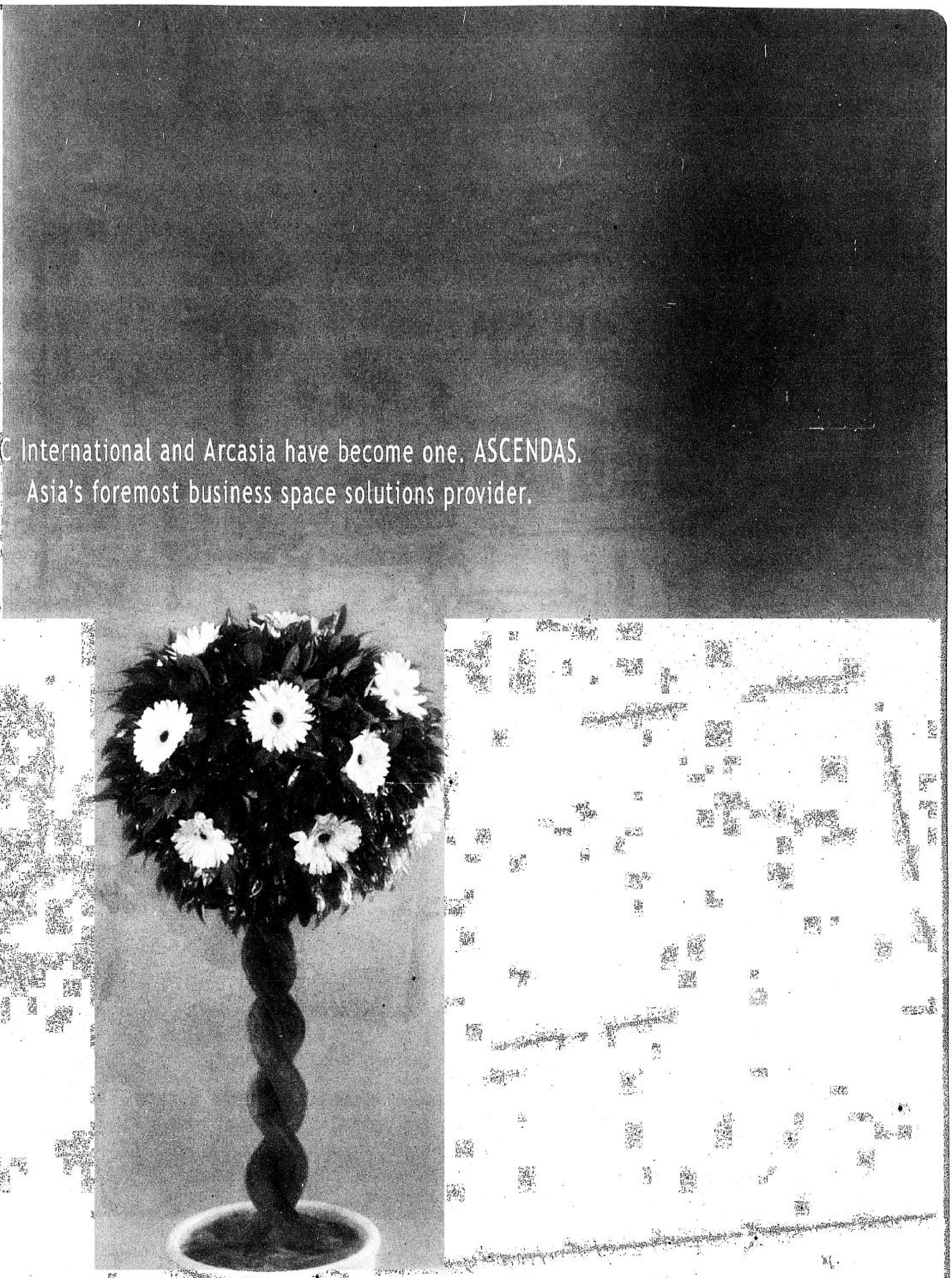
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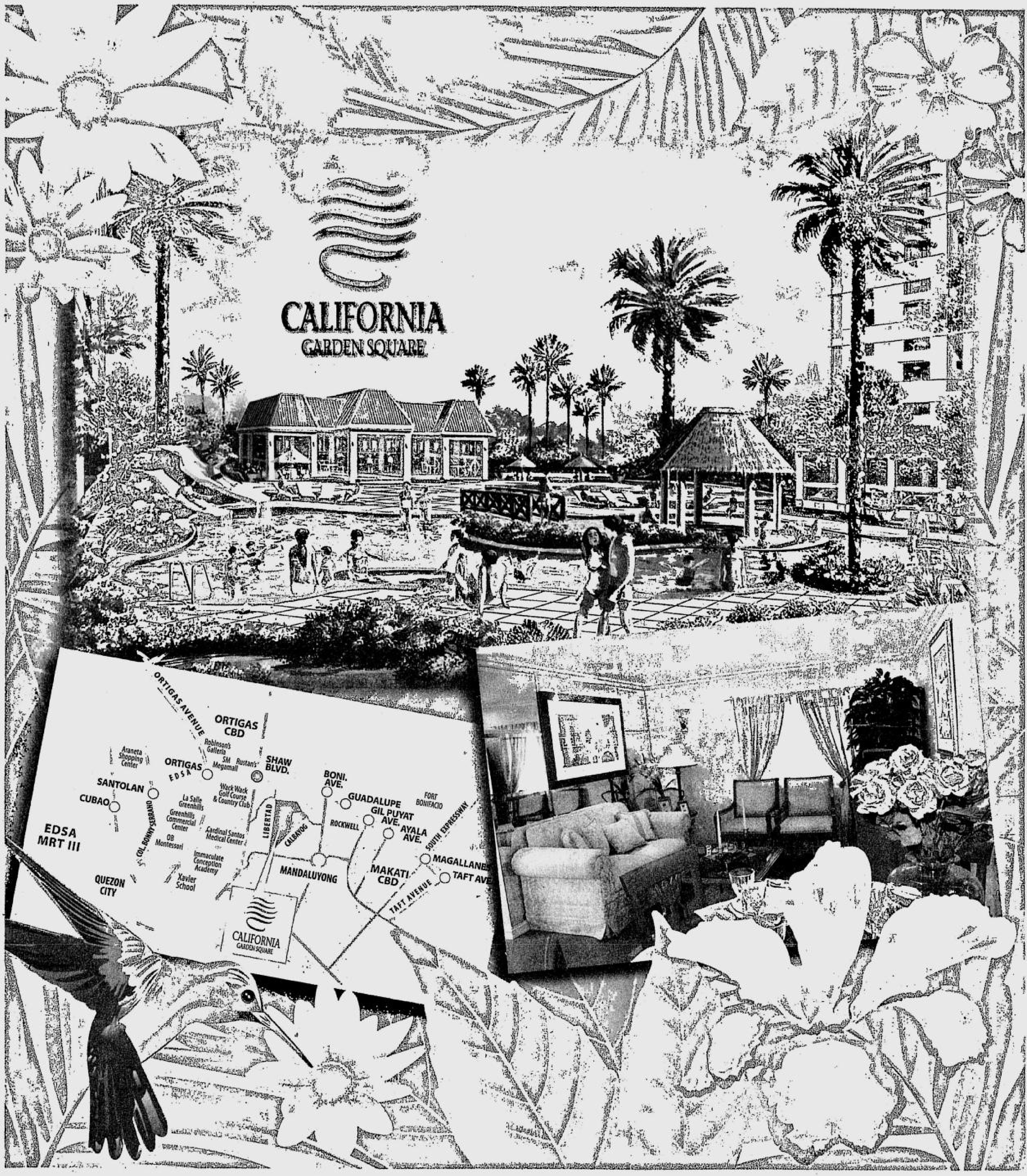
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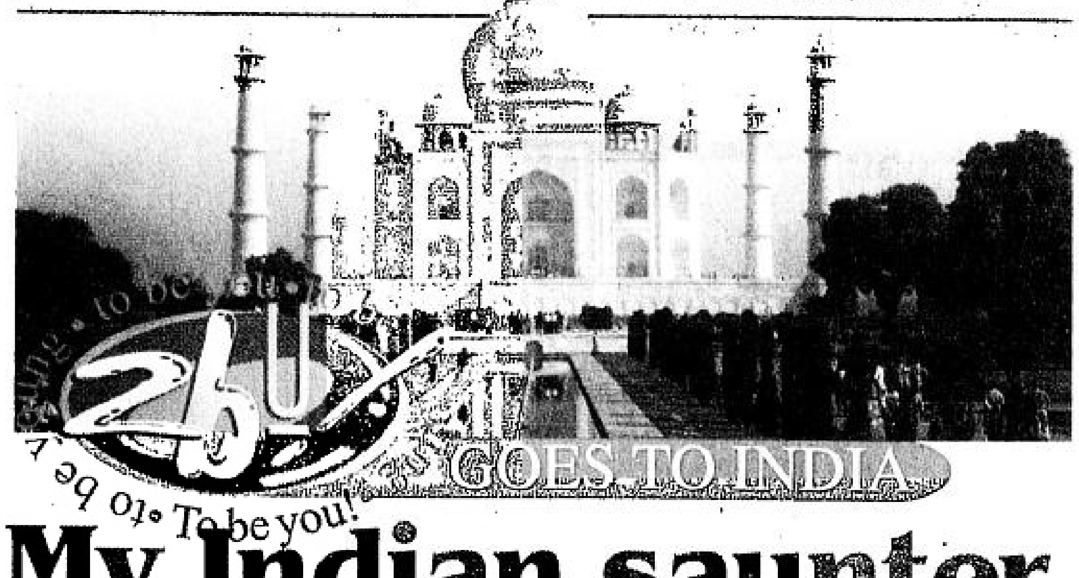
CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor PAM PASTOR, Chief of Correspondents



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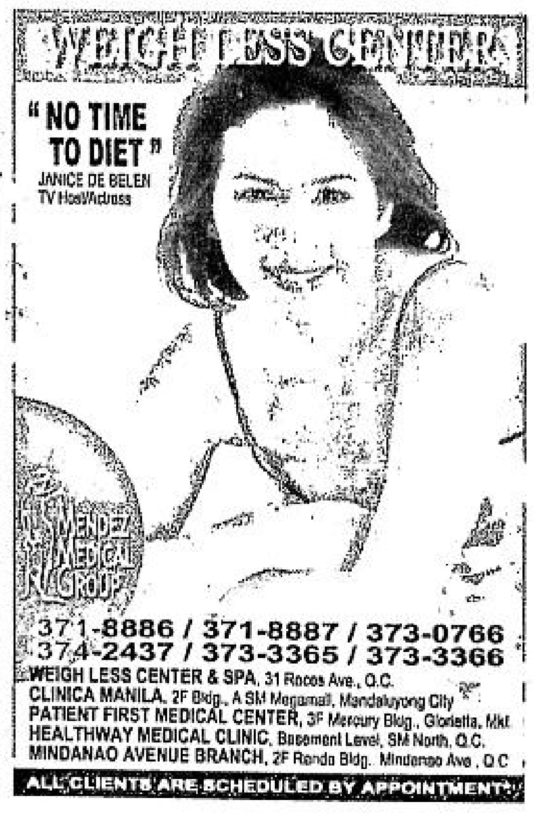
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My Indian saunter

Religion, philosophy, fashion, beauty queens and Bollywood—the subcontinent has it all. Take a ride on our magic saree for a tour of the civilization of striking contrasts that has become a pervasive presence in global culture

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY PAM PASTOR

THE QUESTION. "Would you like to go to New Delhi?" The editor's text message flashed on my cell phone as Mom and I screeched to a halt in front of the office a few Mondays ago. I stifled an excited shriek, images of everything I learned about India through my Philosophy and Asian Studies classes flashing in my mind in dizzying MTV-like visuals.

The drama. Mom wasn't exactly keen on letting her only daughter travel to an unknown land. So she resorted to soap-opera-worthy theatrics. Peace was finally achieved after reassurances that yes, I would take care of myself, and no, I would not be wandering in the streets of India alone at night.

The jokes. When friends and family heard about my trip, the pathetic attempts at humor started to pour in. "*Kumusta mo ako kay* Sushmita." "Don't forget your deodorant, or better yet, Lysol." "*Iutang mo ako sa Bumbay ng* 5-6." "Can you bring home an elephant for me?" and worst of all, "Dude, don't molest any Indians, okay?" Har har. The people I love are wisecracks.

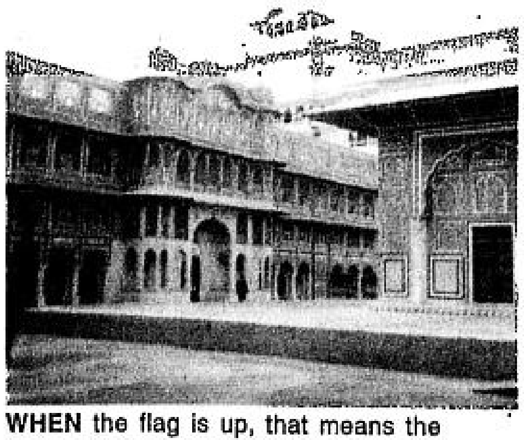
The preparation. The trip soon turned into a family project. My paternal grandma started digging up books on the Taj Mahal and everything else Indian while my maternal grandma prepared my cameras, my luggage and everything else she thought I would need. I read up on India, even went over my now-ratty Philosophy notes and psyched myself up for the trip.

The goal. Before leaving for the airport, I changed the message on my machine. "Will be off to India for the next few days. Hopefully, a serene and calmer me will get in touch with you soon." Yes, I was after enlightenment.

The trip. What a trip it was. Those three days spent in India are days I don't think I will ever, ever forget.

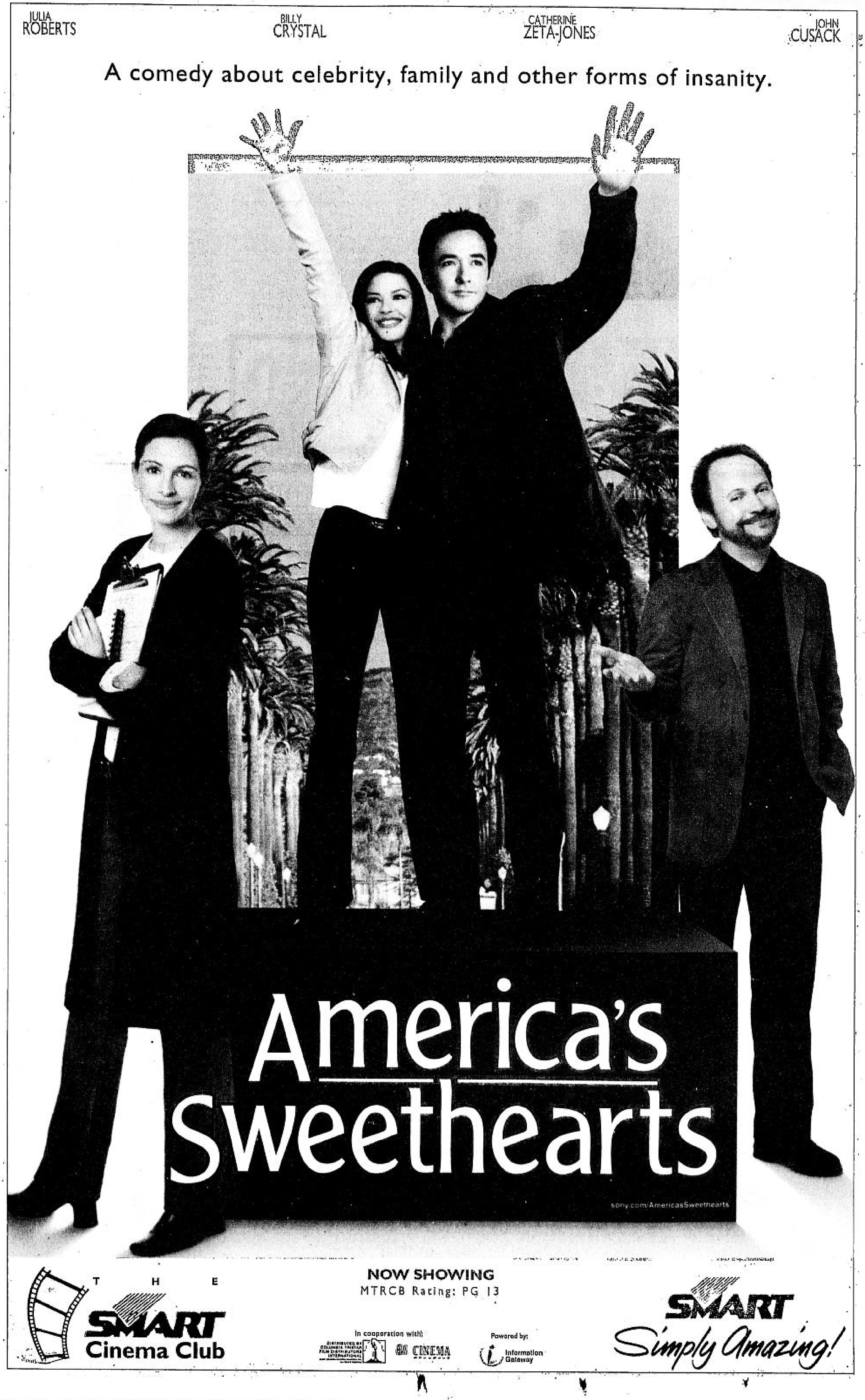
I was with seven Filipino travel agents and Marjorie Custodio of Cathay Pacific. A trip's success has a lot to do with the people involved and I say we're pretty lucky. The different personalities jived well. Marj who took care of everyone; Malou who was so protective of the group and was such a whiz at dealing with persistent Indians; the oh-so-patient and thoughtful Jenny who brought tons of food from Manila just in case anyone got hungry on the bus (I am guilty of endlessly raiding her Butterfinger stash); Jana's gentle ways; Sir Vic's dry wit; Tita Baby's daring personality; Christine's stabi-

MY/p.C3



WHEN the flag is up, that means the Maharaja is there.

THE FAÇADE of the Museum City Palace [illegible] Jaipu[illegible]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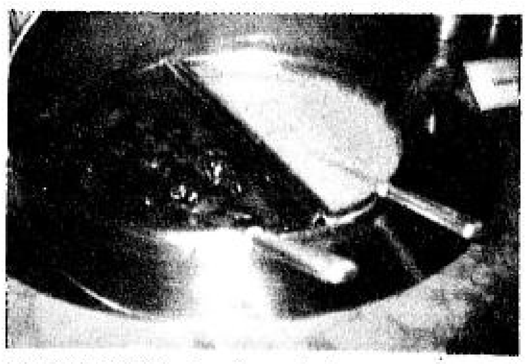
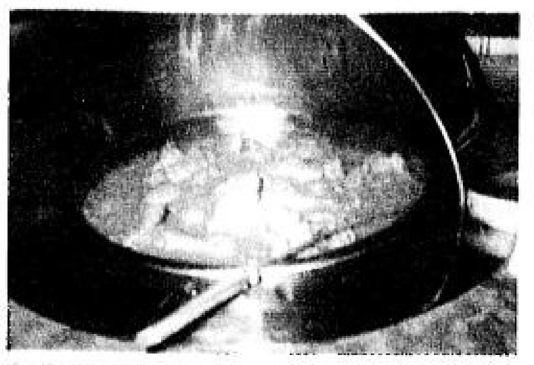
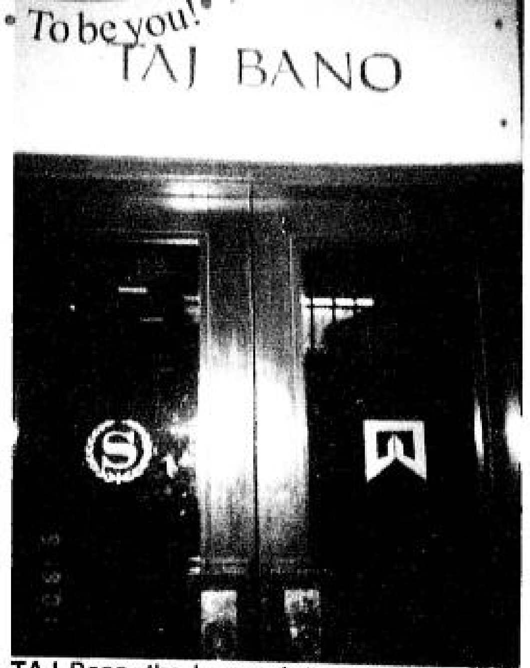
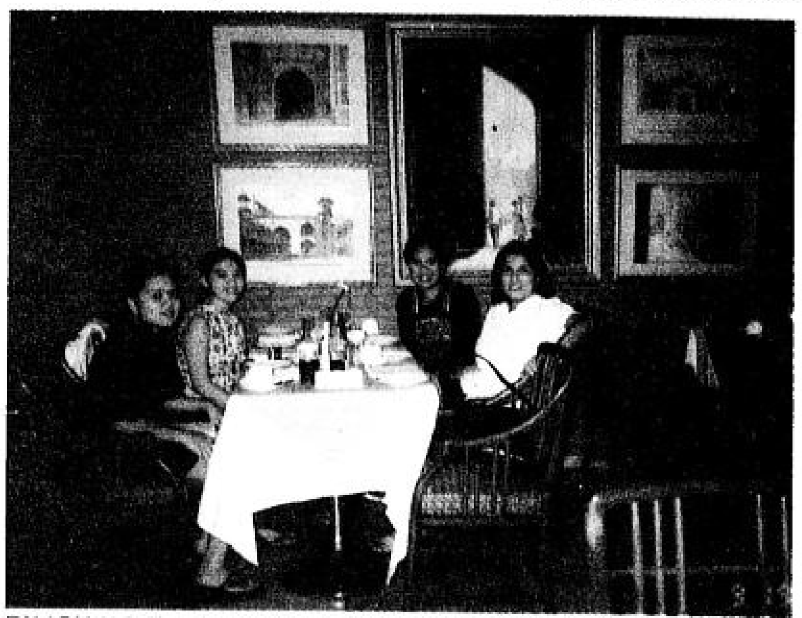

EGGPLANT and yellow *dal*

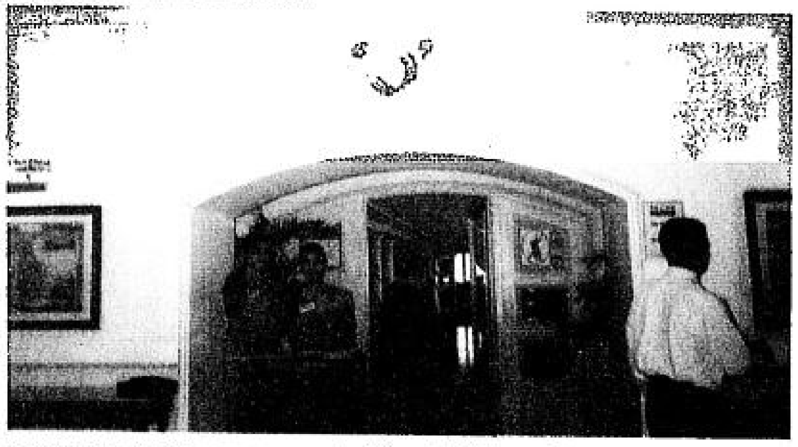

DUN KA MUNG. The "stronger" chicken curry

IMARTI. A favorite Indian dessert



TAJ Bano, the home of the delicious pineapple ice cream


ENJOYING TM James' excellent service with Amita (extreme right), our tour coordinator


DELHI 'o' Delhi serves great *dal* and *fristo mistro.*

Taste of India

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY PAM PASTOR

SAY Indian food and the first word that used to come to mind was True Food, that wonderful restaurant in Boracay where I had my first taste of *papad* and *samosa*. I have to admit, one of the main reasons I was excited about the trip to India was the chance to gorge on Indian food, which I absolutely love.

If the food served on our flights on the way to Delhi was any indication, I would say we were in for a real roller-coaster ride for the palate. Call me weird, but I love airplane food.

KB Kulfi
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Aboard Cathay Pacific on our way to Hong Kong, we had a choice between fried *satay* beef with steamed rice and stir-fried Chinese broccoli or pan-fried halibut fillet with olive, zucchini, red pepper sauce and lime herb butter, boiled potatoes, carrots and snap peas. I went for the beef, knowing that the next few days would be steak-free. My companions thought this was pretty weird, but I loved the garlic bread.

Just a few hours later, on our flight to Delhi, we were served with grilled vegetables with marinated mushrooms. This was doused with vinaigrette and since I am no vinegar fan, this mostly went untouched. Dinner held three choices for us. Sautéed prawns, egg fried rice and stir-fried broccoli or *achari alu* (potatoes with yogurt sauce) tomato rice and bean *poringal* or chicken coconut, tomato rice and okra masala. The prawns were big and juicy. The cheese selection served after dinner was pretty good, too. There was, of course, the constant presence of the garlic bread, which I think will become a big reason for me to enjoy Cathay Pacific flights.

The Chinese dishes served in-flight were from Chiuchow Garden Restaurant, still part of Cathay's Best Chinese Food in the Air campaign.

My first taste of India was the fresh peach nectar served as our welcome drink at the Marriott Hotel in New Delhi. The liquid, which was cold, smooth and fragrant, would transport one to a tropical paradise before swallowing brings you back to hotel lobby reality.

New Delhi

Delhi 'o' Delhi
Indian Habitat Centre

Lunch was at a restaurant located in New Delhi's more posh area. Not entirely popular, most of the people who eat in Delhi 'o' Delhi are people who are attending conferences in the Indian Habitat Centre.

We began with drinks. The lime juice tasted more like Alka-Seltzer. Another drink they were trying was called *lassi*, yogurt-like and, according to them, tasted like expired milk in the beginning. "It's an acquired taste." I like my milk fresh. I settled for a good old glass of cola. Soon, lentil *papad* was placed on the table. This time, unlike the flat round discs in Boracay, the *papad* had been rolled into cones.

There was a huge buffet laid out. *Tori masala* (squash), yellow *dal* (lentil *dal*), *khartle baingan*, *makkai pulao* (rice with spices), *dun ka mung* (chicken curry), potato crust fish, *fristo mistro* (vegetables cooked tempura-style), *paneer do pyaaza* (cottage cheese) and spicy chutney pickles were all lined up around the main table. Another table was laden with a variety of breads, chili with mango, chick peas salad, pasta salad and chicken salad. There was another table for dessert, which included vanilla cheesecake, *zauk-e-shaki* (sweet round spongy balls dipped in a creamy liquid), chocolate pudding and a sanitized version of *imarti*, which we earlier saw being cooked on the streets on fishball-type stands.

My top picks were the yellow *dal*, which is the spicier version of our *monggo*, and *roti*, their soft bread and the less refined version of the *naan*—which became my every meal staple. I like soaking the *roti* in *dal*—the combination of the *dal*'s spice and the *roti*'s soft texture makes for perfection every single bite. The *fristo mistro* was really good, so was the chicken curry, although the spices used are much stronger than your usual Pinoy-style curry. The *imarti* was the dessert for me. Every sugary bite crumbles and then melts in your mouth.

SCOOPING up Taj Bano's creamy ice cream.

Agra

Mugal Sheraton Hotel

For dinner that night, we began with cocktails in a suite. Since I don't drink, I settled for the finger food instead. There were cheese sticks and the chicken *tikka* with mint sauce that Sir Vic and Missy probably find unforgettable. Already bursting with flavor, it was even better when sprinkled with lemon.

Taj Bano
Mugal Sheraton Hotel

Once again, we were in for a major buffet treat. There were Chinese dishes but I still chose to focus on the Indian food. Fish *amritsari*, *paneer pasanda*, *gabhi keemar* (a cauliflower dish), *aloo achari*, *del harra moong* (lentil), chicken in hot garlic sauce and veal piccata. While I was enjoying the lentil *dal* with *roti* again, Amita said, "You are eating the every day meal of a poor man." Great. I could survive poverty in India.

The ice cream was really good. Although the chocolate was a bit too strong for my taste, the strawberry, vanilla, pineapple more than made up for it. The pineapple was extra good.

The service in this restaurant was impeccable. TM James told us, "I'll take care of you." And that was exactly what he did.

Jaipur

Jal Mahal
Rajputana Sheraton

Most of us agreed that this was possibly the best dinner we had. The perfect combination of Western dishes and Indian delicacies—ideal for those who were longing for more familiar tastes. The Chicken Newburg was creamy. The penne with creamy basil sauce was a delight. The sauce was milky and bursting with the flavor of garlic and cheese. The sliced fish in black bean sauce was cooked Chinese-style and was good, too. A break from all the Indian food. Missy loved the *keema hyderbadi* (mutton). Despite the supposed shift to Western dishes, I still couldn't resist the *dal panchmael* with the *roti*. Everyone loved the tomato egg drop soup, especially Malou. The main courses were great and the desserts were even better. Jenny insisted that I try everything. And she was right. Everything was good. The Chocolate Gateau was soft and moist, the assorted cheesecakes had the right touch of tang. The banana strudel was sweet and went really well with the ice cream. What made that dinner even more enjoyable was the hilarious conversation. We had such a blast recalling the previous days' exploits.

Behror

The Rendezvuous
Sarai Rapujtana Resort Club

On the way back to New Delhi, we dropped by Behror for lunch. The chosen restaurant, although the name is quite funny because of the evident mistake in spelling, serves respectably good Indian food. The menu also includes continental and Chinese cuisine. We ordered the chicken *tikka* (150 rupees), which was good although less flavorful than what we had during cocktails two nights before. Sir Vic, Jana and I had to endure teasing from the others since we were the ones who loved Indian food, attacking with zeal, even asking for more spice, to the bewilderment of the others.

On the coaster

Even on the bus, we never got hungry. Because of Jenny Pong's thoughtfulness, we had a constant supply of chocolates, junk food and ham sandwiches from Manila. We never ran out of water and Pepsi either, courtesy of the coaster cooler.

Top of the Village
New Delhi

This was to be our last meal in India, a farewell dinner hosted by Captain Swadesh Kumar from Shikhar Travels and his wife. The ambience was definitely different. We were on top of a building, enjoying the fresh air and the view of the ruins below. There were musicians who performed as we enjoyed our meal. Waiters fluttered around us, placing servings of chicken, cottage cheese, lamb, buttered chicken, lamb in a creamy sauce and the ever-present *dal*. Missy and I loved the lamb—there was no aftertaste and the sauce was really creamy. The best part of the meal was the Kulfi, really nutty pistachio ice cream in a small *palayok* covered with a red cloth and tied with a gold ribbon. Sir Vic loved it so much that he had three.

On our flight from Delhi to Hong Kong, I immediately dozed off when I saw the word *tikka* in the menu. I love Indian food and all, but after three straight days, I think I needed a break. I did buy a recipe book and brought home spices, ready-to-fry *papad* and beans so I could make *dal* at home. Although I've been thinking about hosting an Indian dinner, my ingredients have remained untouched in the cupboard. Maybe in a few weeks. Maybe.

Sky Dance
Hong Kong Airport

We enjoyed lunch at Sky Dance where I got a combo of roast goose and pork for HK$65. Not exactly dirt cheap, but the meal was definitely worth it. The pork was crisp, the goose juicy. My mouth still waters when I think about it.

On the way back to Manila, I enjoyed the potato skin with spicy beef and cheese served with sour cream. It was especially good with the garlic bread. (Here I go again.)

According to Rohit, our New Delhi guide, other restaurants in India that we should take note of are Essex Farms in the South of Delhi and Havelli and the House of Ming in the Taj Mahal Hotel. If we wanted fast-food, Nirula was a good choice, he said. I totally regret the fact that I wasn't able to give McDonald's a shot—I mean, what is McDonald's like without the Quarter Pounder or the Big Mac? (Altogether now, two all-beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese...) I should have tried the mutton special. And I'm sad we weren't able to try Pizza Hut, either. Because Jenny had been raving about it ("*Iba kasi yung* bread"), we wanted to order but were constantly left too full.

One thing I find unbelievable though, is the fact that I went to India, but never got to eat chicken tandoori. Hmmm.

SHOPPING DIRECTORY

If you ever find yourself in India, here are some stores you might want to check out.

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My Indian saunter

(From page C1)

lity; and Missy's sense of humor—it was a gift to be with such a happy group. Everyone was constantly laughing, having a good time. We were to take a tour of India's Golden Triangle—the cities of New Delhi, Jaipur and Agra. I was the only writer on the trip, a scribe of sorts. While the rest took in the sights and sounds with their senses, while they enjoyed the food, I scribbled notes, trying to take with me as much of India as I could possibly can. Now, poring over the chicken-scrawled notebook, I realize that the notes are not enough. That five rolls of film were not enough to capture the country's essence. That there is so much of India to know and to write about and that I was not able to absorb everything. There are so many stories in India, every single person there seems to have his own tale to tell. And in a few days, I was able to gather my own.

Money-makers

Because of poverty, Indians come up with all sorts of ways to make money. Getting off the bus near the Indian gate, we were greeted by a little Indian boy who suddenly started to do acrobatics in front of us for money. In that same area, a man was tugging along two monkeys all dressed up—one was a boy and one was a girl. These monkeys supposedly performed tricks, and yes, the audience had to pay up.

Bears weren't safe. Those who wandered around were usually seized and trained to perform tricks for money. Little boys performed magic on the streets. Some of them danced. It was almost a circus out there and everything seemed to have a price. If somebody handed you a tissue paper in the bathroom, you must pay for it. If someone at the Taj Mahal points out to you the Taj's reflection on the water and you take a picture of it, expect to be asked for money. It happened to Sir Vic Vibal. If you even glance at the flute-playing man and his cobra that's slithering in an old basket, expect to be charged.

I was constantly wary of everything around me, especially persistent salespeople. My paranoia led me to a very embarrassing incident in a gift shop in one of the hotels we visited. A salesman in the gift shop motioned that he wanted to stick a *bhindi* (?) on my forehead and I said, "No," believing that if I allowed him, he would charge me. "Is free, madam." Somehow, I turned deaf when he said "free." That wasn't exactly a word I would associate with gift shops there. "No!" I said even more firmly. "But is free!" he said again, apparently exasperated. I was beginning to get confused. Still, I kept saying no. "Is gift!" he said even louder. By this time, one of my companions was beside me. She nudged me, "Gift *daw*." Oh. Okay. I finally relented. "Sorry," I said, smiling sheepishly, with the *bhindi* glittering on my forehead. Okay, maybe not everything has a price.

Contrast

Just last year, I remember spending hours listening to King Shuk, my officemate in a dotcom I used to work for. He would spin endless tales about his country and one of the words that he constantly used in his descriptions was "contrast." Those stories filled me with the desire to go there and when I finally did, I realized that yes, India really is a land of contrasts.

The very same statement was used by Rohit Mitter, our guide in Delhi. And the scene in the streets would tell you what he meant. India is where the old meld with the new, the traditional with the contemporary, the rich with the poor. Signs for Internet cafés were hung on old red sandstone buildings, billboards for SMS technology that read "shrt n swt" and "bad spllng wrks" were placed over old stores, saree-wearing women had cellphones with them.

There is so much more to India than meets the eye. While 60 percent of Indians are illiterate, those who have been schooled excel, especially in information technology and management. Those people who believe that "backward" and "India" are synonymous should bite their tongues. Indians have beaten Americans when it comes to producing software.

Nightlife is virtually nonexistent. There's a bar in Hyatt called Dijjins, a club in Hotel Park Royal called Floats and the discotheque in Sheraton, which is supposedly the best there is—but nightlife in India usually ends at midnight. It's a Cinderella complex.

India's film industry is flourishing. Indians produce an average of 900 films a year. And the top 20 movies every year are all local. They pose a tough competition to Hollywood starrers. Their music industry isn't far behind either. They have bands that play all sorts of music genres.

Not enough

Nothing is predictable. While I might have learned a lot, the three days were not enough for the total cultural immersion I was looking forward to. I might have ridden Ruffa the elephant, but I wasn't able to visit the park were Indians go on Sunday nights to have ice cream. I might have eaten in the best hotel restaurants, but I wasn't able to hang out in the stores in their normal neighborhoods. I want to listen to more stories, meet more people, see more of India, know how Indians really live. Right in the midst of the trip, I promised myself that in a few years, I will go back and stay for at least a month. Three days definitely wasn't enough to bring me enlightenment.

Over dinner, I asked Amita, our tour coordinator, endless questions about her country. She patiently answered them, but usually ended every answer with the sentence, "Just like in your country." I stopped to think about that. Indeed, in every country, there are social classes. They may not be called the caste system as a whole, but there are always sectors and divisions. There will always be a generation gap whichever country you might be in. You have old people clinging to tradition while young people strive to break free from it.

Now that I think about it, India actually is very similar to the Philippines. Poverty-stricken but struggling, developing, we have all sorts of people trying to stick to the old while others keep pushing for the new. Like India, we have infrastructures that define history and keep it alive. We have that wide gap between the rich and the poor, the illiterate and the educated. We have people struggling to make a living. We have great heroes who died for noble causes. We have people who bring pride to humanity and people who seem to have been born with the desire to spit on the rest of us. We have a country of strong people who continue to face every day's challenge of fighting for survival.

I had to travel to a foreign country to get to know my own better. Strange. Maybe this is enlightenment after all.

For details on Cathay Pacific's Golden Triangle Tour Package, visit www.cathaypacific.com.

E-mail the author at p-a-m-m-y@gurlmail.com

AN ARTIST sketches the Hall of Mirrors in Jaipur.

THE HAPPY GROUP. Jana, Malou, Christine, Tita Baby, Missy, the author, Marj and Jenny

YES, camels walk in the street.

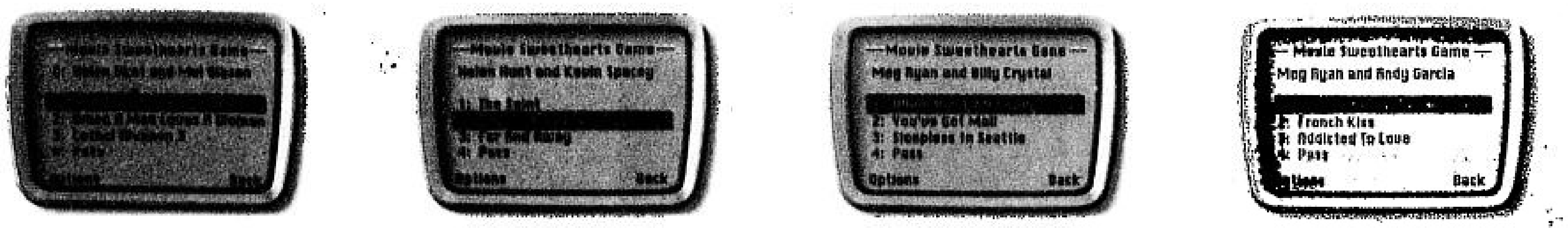
TYPICAL street scene in Jaipur

How Much Do You Know About Hollywood Couples?

Play the Movie Sweethearts Game to find out more about...

THE SMART Cinema Club
America's Sweethearts

To play the game, match the couple to the movie.



It's easy! Just key in PLAY AS. You'll be asked to choose the movies that famous couples starred in.
To answer, simply press REPLY and key in the number (1, 2, 3, or 4) corresponding your choice. Press SEND.

What's more, you can also access official America's Sweethearts logos, picture messages, group graphics, and screen savers.

To access, key in **JOIN CINEMA** and send to **239**. Then follow the simple steps below.

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Logo List of Keywords	LOGO AS and send to 239
Logos*	LOGO <keyword> and send to 239
Group Graphics Keywords	GROUP AS and send to 239
Group Graphics*	GROUP <keyword> and send to 239
Picture Messages List of Keywords	PIC AS and send to 239
Picture Messages	PIC <keyword> and send to 239
Screen Savers List of Keywords	SAVER AS and send to 239
Screen Savers**	SAVER <keyword> and send to 239
To play the Movie Sweethearts Game	PLAY AS and send to 239
To check points accumulated	DPOINTS and send to 239

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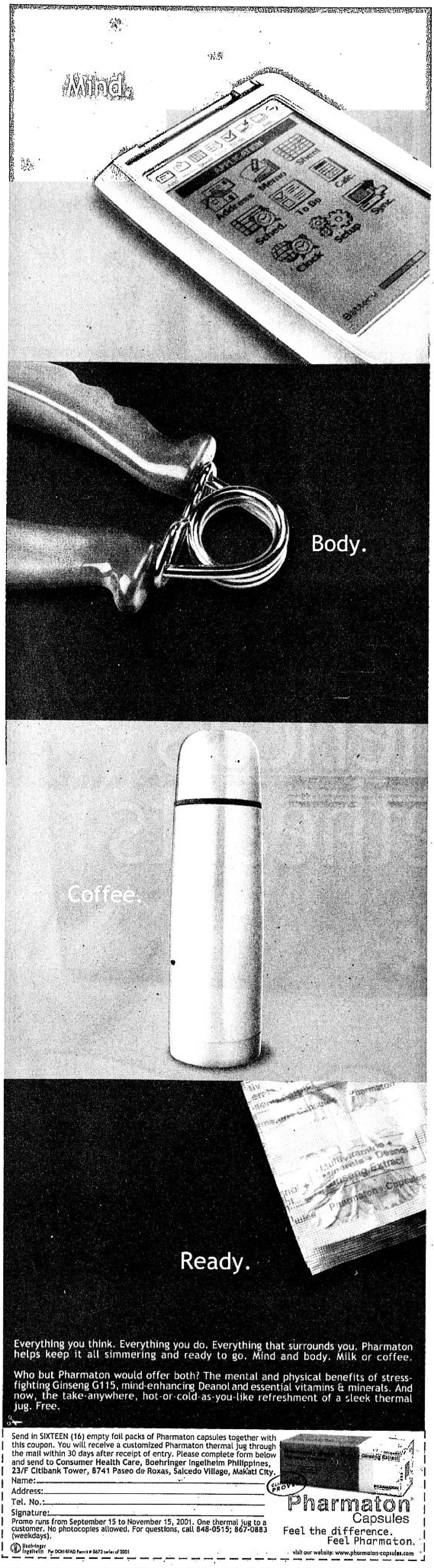

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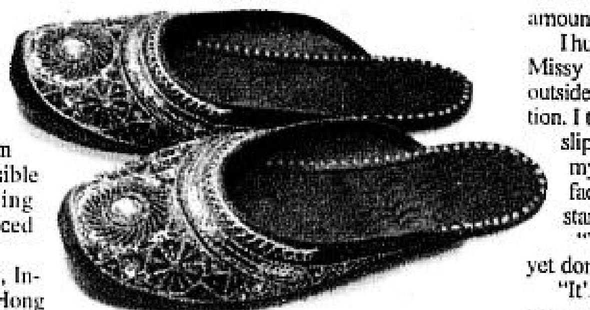
The attack of the pucker-happy salesman and other Indian shop-till-you-drop tales

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Roger Carpio

WILL not shop, will not shop." This was supposedly my mantra during my few days in India. I wanted to focus on my possible enlightenment rather than my buying power. I returned to Manila shame-faced and loaded with packages.



Contrary to what most people think, India is a shopper's paradise. No, it's not Hong Kong with the huge malls and upscale boutiques. According to our Delhi guide Rohit, there's only one "mall" in India with branded items—and even that doesn't look like the malls we know. For people who were born to shop, India is packed with treasures, if you know where to look.

It helped that several of my companions were compulsive shoppers like me. No. 1 on that list is Missy (More on her exploits later.). We had the knack for finding great shops or stalls, rather, and for getting salespeople to give us low, low prices.

Another thing I love about shopping in India is the exchange rate. With the rupee almost having the same value as the peso (47 rupees = 1 US dollar), there was no need for multiplication to bog me down. I had the privilege of focusing on my choices and on haggling. Just remember, bring US dollars.

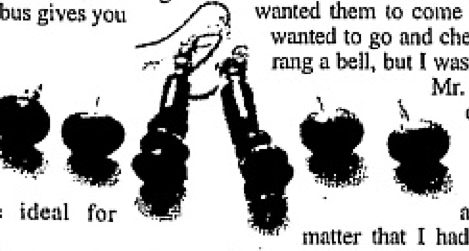
It's sad, but true—the peso seems to have no value there. We tried asking several hotels, "Can you change our Philippine pesos to rupees?" and we were promptly given either blank or confused stares.

Purchases are generally reasonable—you can get skirts and loose pants off the racks in the streets for P75-100. There are a lot of other good buys. Shoes—soft sandals and beaded slippers you wouldn't find in shops here. They're durable, too, according to Malou, who wore her old Indian slip-ons for years before throwing them out. Hand-stitched bed covers, food and spices. Books are generally cheap, too, since a lot of reprints are done in India. Handicrafts on wood and marble are also big buys.

Persistent vendors

My first taste of Indian shopping was right outside Jame Masid, their biggest mosque. Sometimes, you don't have to hunt for bargains—they approach you. When you are in tourist areas, vendors flock toward you, following you to the bus and even trying to open the windows when you are already inside. To say that they are persistent would be an understatement. If you think the salesgirls of *tiangges* are annoying when they constantly say, "*Pili na*, Ma'am," you should experience being mobbed by these vendors. But this does not mean one should ignore them. After all, they do have a lot of goodies on their hands.

If you are traveling on a packaged tour, the secret is to get on your tour bus or coaster, let them crowd around it (not inside, let me stress that) and then decide which items you want to see. There are two reasons for this. One, it is not a good idea to bring your wallet out when you are out on the streets. Two, standing in the comfort of your bus gives you more time to haggle.



These vendors usually carry along necklaces, silver anklets, wooden sculptures, little marble carvings, postcards, etc., etc., etc.—stuff that are ideal for *pasalubong*.

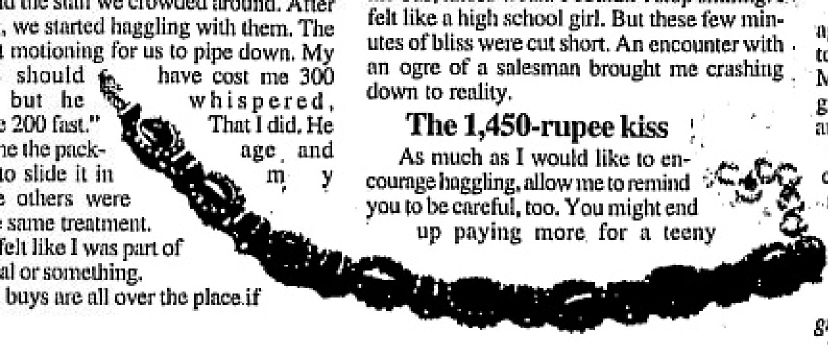
Never give in to the first price they tell you, no matter how reasonable it may seem. If you are good at haggling, you might end up paying just 20 percent of the original price. Be firm, name even the most outrageously low price you could think of. God knows I've been surprised countless times when they gave in to my too low offers.

Haggling as a tool

Haggling is not only limited to the streets—this seems to be an art in India. You may haggle in most stores, even hotel gift shops. Gift shops are a mine, too. They sell everything from books, clothes, houseware, decorative items and jewelry. If you love silver, especially old silver jewelry, you would go crazy. I did. Marj and the others felt like they had to restrain me every time they saw earrings. Just as well. I purchased about 15 pairs in less than three days. And that doesn't include the rings I bought yet.

The fugitives

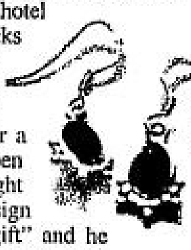
The first store we visited was selling necklaces made of semiprecious stones. A stern-looking Indian man and a young girl were standing behind the stall we crowded around. After choosing, we started haggling with them. The man kept motioning for us to pipe down. My earrings should have cost me 300 rupees, but he whispered, "Give me 200 fast." That I did. He handed me the package and told me to slide it in my bag. The others were given the same treatment. Weird. I felt like I was part of a drug deal or something.



Good buys are all over the place if you have the patience. However, if I were to choose only one place where I would shop, I'd pick Jaipur with no second thoughts. An area in the pink city, it consists of streets that are actually endless stretches of shops and stalls. Missy, Jana and I regretted the fact that we didn't get to spend more time there.

The gift

Indian salespeople are an interesting lot. One man in a gift shop in a hotel where we stopped for snacks gave me a discount, but asked for a gift in return. "I don't get it," I said. I thought he was asking for a tip. "Do you have a ball pen there?," he asked. I brought out my new black Pilot sign pen. That became "my gift" and he seemed pretty happy with it.



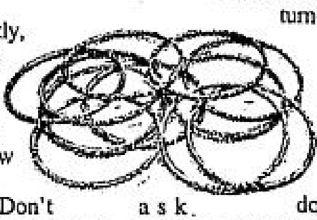
Another man from the same store kept showing me a marble key chain with one of the Kama Sutra images carved on it and asking if I was married. Very, very strange.

The salespeople are generally friendly. Most of them have a good grasp of English, are very polite and are quite charming. One warning you must not ignore—this same charm may dupe you into buying too much. Shoppers, beware of gorgeous Indians. Yes, as embarrassed I am to admit it, this happened to me.

Falling for a salesman

We headed for a more upscale store in Jaipur where a few of my companions were going to buy semiprecious stones. They went to the store's upper floors, but I quickly lost interest and went to the ground floor where the old silver jewelry were. An Indian Apa Ongpin-lookalike stood behind the glass display where the most interesting pieces were.

I approached hesitantly, attracted to a pair of dangling amethyst earrings set in silver. He offered to show me more earrings that they had in stock. I looked up and saw his sparkling deep-set eyes framed by long, long lashes. Then he smiled and I had to draw my breath. The guy was beautiful.



I shook my head quickly, wanting to focus on the jewelry, not on him. But his constant talking and his presence were a major bane. I kept asking, "How much?"

But then he said, "Don't ask for the price, Madame. The question is, do you want it?"

He put on bracelets and rings on me and I stood there, just a blabbering idiot. I couldn't even meet his stare. He wanted to show me around the rest of the store. "Madame, please, just give me five more minutes," he said.

Malou and the others were asking me if I wanted them to come back for me or if I wanted to go and check out shoes. Shoes rang a bell, but I was still enamored with Mr. Gorgeous. I frantically motioned for them to wait for me and went on following him around like a poor dog. It didn't matter that I had to spell my name before he understood it. It didn't matter when he said, "I Jack," when he said his own.

He asked me where I was from and what I was doing in India. Then he asked, with a glint in his eye, "What's so special about India?" By this time, my brain was nothing but a spoonful of mush.

"The food."

"Just the food?," he asked.

No… You! I was almost ready to blurt that out, but then I regained a little bit of self-respect and said, "The entire experience—the people, the culture…"

By this time, the guide probably wanted to drag me by my hair. I signaled I was just going to pay for the items. I wasn't even set on buying anything and there I was, ready to purchase two pairs of earrings and an amethyst ring.

When the package was wrapped, Jack handed me a small gift. "Here's a gift. Maybe you'd remember me when you're back in the Philippines."

Definitely. I went off and staggered toward the bus, knees weak. I couldn't stop smiling. I felt like a high school girl. But these few minutes of bliss were cut short. An encounter with an ogre of a salesman brought me crashing down to reality.

The 1,450-rupee kiss

As much as I would like to encourage haggling, allow me to remind you to be careful, too. You might end up paying more for a teeny amount of discount.

I hurriedly went inside the shoe stall in Jaipur. Missy and Malou were picking out shoes just outside, but the collection inside caught my attention. I tried on a pair of lovely beaded turquoise slippers and then started choosing pairs for my mom and grandmothers. The guy, whose face I didn't even look at in the beginning, started wrapping everything I touched.

"Wait," I said, "Don't wrap them. I'm not yet done."

"It's okay, it's okay. You choose then I give you good price," he said.

I asked for his price. He stood beside me and jotted everything down on paper. The grand total? 2,450 rupees. "Forget it," I said.

He crossed out what he wrote and asked me to give my price. "A thousand," I said.

He threw his hands up in the air. "Madame, that's impossible!"

I shrugged my shoulders and walked out, hearing him say, "You are my guest. Give me your price."

I went to the store next door which sold nothing but bangles of all colors. Missy, Jana and Marj were going crazy there, making the salespeople bring out all their stocks. After a while, I decided to go and check out the bhindis right outside the shop.

The guy, who was actually an Indian version of David Arquette, only he looks like he hasn't taken a bath in a month, was standing outside holding a plastic bag filled with my four pairs of shoes. He started bugging me again, mumbling stuff like, "My shop is your shop" and "Madame, at least give me 1,500."

I shook my head. "One thousand," I said firmly.

"Okay okay, okay." Whoa. He caved. Only this time, he was standing a bit too close that it was uncomfortable. I fidgeted my way to the bangle stall only to find myself face to face with a wall and trapped.

With my back turned to him, I quickly pulled out my money and handed it to him over my shoulder. He reached over and I felt his hand graze against the top of my chest. Must have been accidental. But then it happened again.

Then I felt something graze against my butt. My heart was racing this time then he motioned he wanted me to shake his hand. I held out my hand limply just to get it over with. I thought if I shook his hand, he'd leave but then he said, "Give me a kiss."

"What?!?!" I whirled around and shouted in his face, "No!!!" Then I went over and found refuge in Marj. The guy was still staring when we hurried to the bus. Creepy. I only told them what happened when we left the place and it had sunk in. It was scary at that moment but it turned hilarious after.

The ultimate shopaholic

Allow me to devote a section of this article to the escapades of a Filipina shopaholic in India. Missy bought everything and for some reason, she was a magnet for vendors. They seem to sense her weak will power when it comes to shopping. She'd wave them off and then have them rushing back by saying, "How much? How much?"

When two men brought Pashmina stoles to our hotel, I heard her say, "No, I'm not going to buy. They will just get stuck in my closet anyway," before I went in to take a bath. When I got out of the bathroom, Missy had already purchased three. And when they brought out printed ones, she wailed, asking them why they didn't bring them out sooner. Sir Vic had a major laughing fit over that.

Missy became my partner in crime, along with Jana. We are usually the first to dash off to stores and when we suddenly disappear, like we did after our barbecue dinner, everyone knows the reason. We're all shopping.

One night, when everyone else was asleep in the Rajputana Palace Sheraton, the three of us went down with Christine in hopes of finding shops that were still open. We went on a shopping frenzy. Unfortunately, we hardly had any rupees left in our wallets and Jana and Missy wanted to purchase bed covers. Yes, we brought a salesman back to the hotel so he could wait for us to change more money so he could be paid.

Actually, Missy has a logical reason for shopping like she does. She said, "Back at home, birthdays and special occasions usually arise, then you'd be rushing to find gifts. *'Pag bumili ka sa* Manila, there's a chance *may kapareho ka.* Abroad you can get good stuff for good prices that you can use as gifts later on."

One moment that defined Missy's shopping talent was when she was able to haggle while on top of an elephant. While on top of Ruffa, our colorful baby elephant, Marj spotted a bag in one of the stores that we passed by on the way up to the fort. Missy shouted to the boy manning the store, "How much, how much?"

"300!"

"No, 100!" Missy shouted over and over again until the boy relented. He ended up tossing the bag to the elephant "driver" and Marj let two 50-rupee bills flutter to the ground. A major bargain while riding a huge animal—that's Missy.

And that's shopping in India for you. It's crazy, it's fun and will definitely give you more than just *pasalubong* to bring home. You'd get countless stories to tell your loved ones over and over again.

E-mail the author at p-a-m-m-y@gurlmail.com

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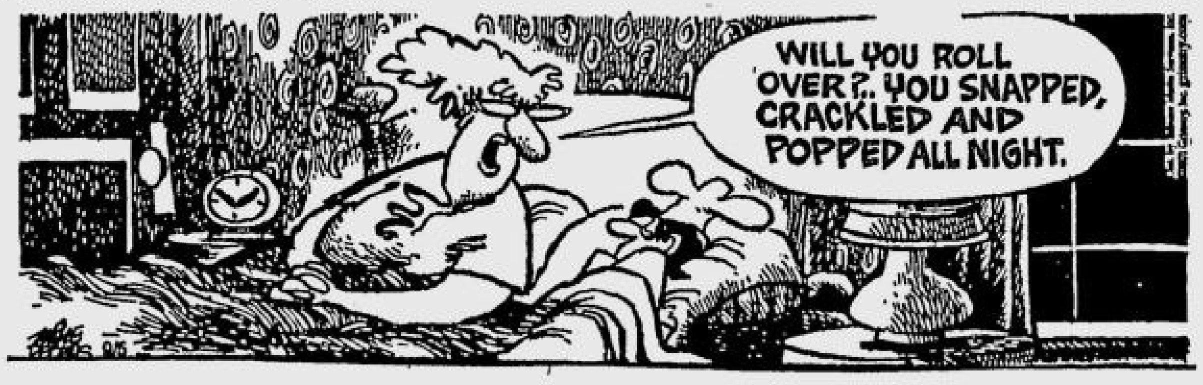
COMIC Relief

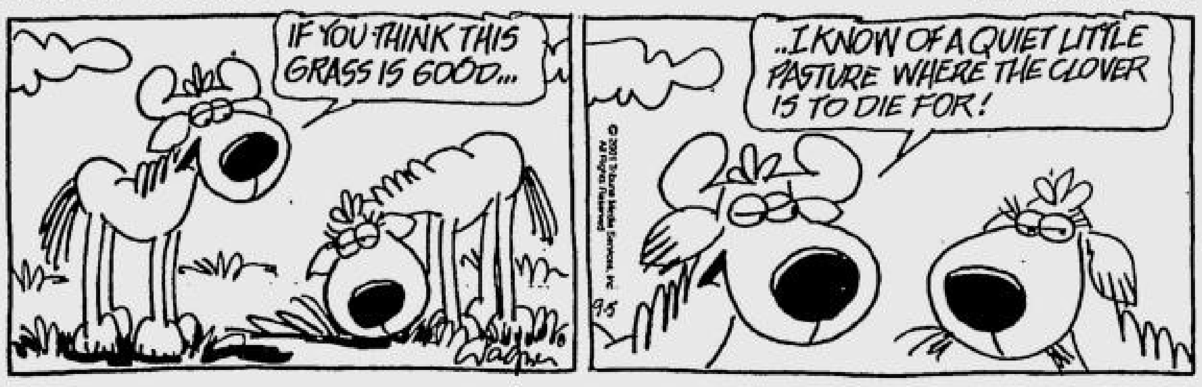
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


WILL YOU ROLL OVER?.. YOU SNAPPED, CRACKLED AND POPPED ALL NIGHT.

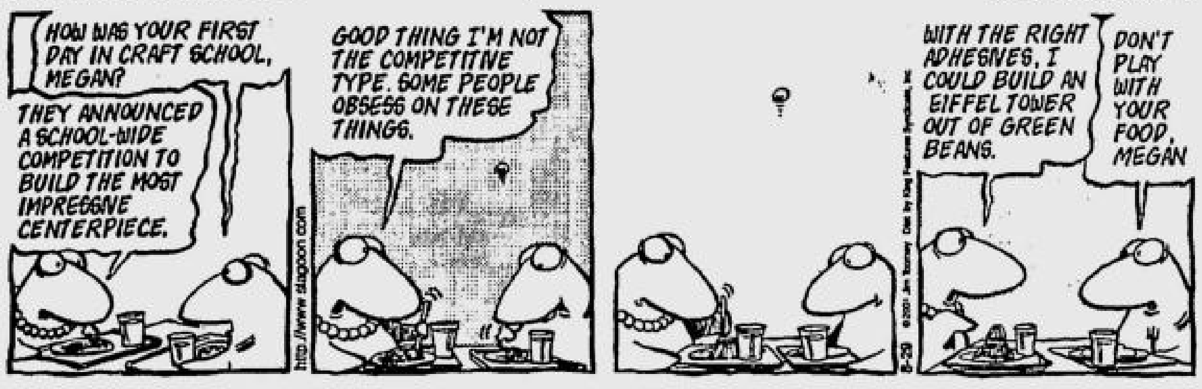
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


IF YOU THINK THIS GRASS IS GOOD...
..I KNOW OF A QUIET LITTLE PASTURE WHERE THE CLOVER IS TO DIE FOR!

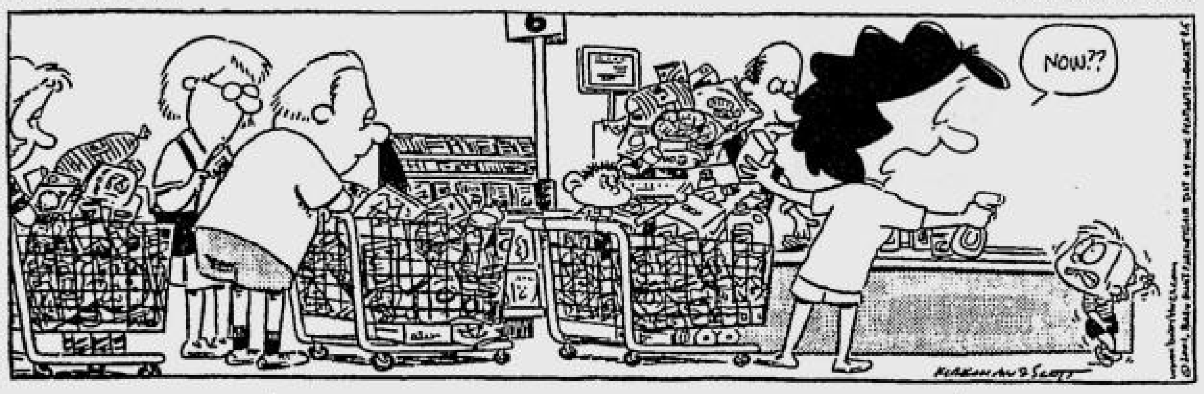
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


HOW WAS YOUR FIRST DAY IN CRAFT SCHOOL, MEGAN?
THEY ANNOUNCED A SCHOOL-WIDE COMPETITION TO BUILD THE MOST IMPRESSIVE CENTERPIECE.
GOOD THING I'M NOT THE COMPETITIVE TYPE. SOME PEOPLE OBSESS ON THESE THINGS.
WITH THE RIGHT ADHESIVES, I COULD BUILD AN EIFFEL TOWER OUT OF GREEN BEANS.
DON'T PLAY WITH YOUR FOOD, MEGAN
http://www.slagoon.com

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


6
NOW??
KIRKMAN AND SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Dave Winfield, Neve Campbell, Gore Vidal, Roy, Tommy Lee

Happy Birthday: You'll find it easy to chug along and complete projects that may have lagged in the past. Your unique creativity will elicit interest from observers. Your numbers: 19, 21, 24, 32, 36, 28

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Stop griping and start on some worthwhile project. Don't blame others. If you are loving and affectionate instead of persnickety, relationships will be rewarding.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Take action on those improvements in your personal life. Taking care of legal matters can clear the air and finishing paperwork can clear the slate.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Participate in events to meet some fascinating people. Partnerships are possible and progress can be made, but be careful. Someone's word may not be good, so get all promises in writing.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Home-improvement projects will add value. You can make money if you concentrate on financial planning. Forming a partnership could be what you need to subsidize your ideas.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): A dream can turn into reality. Your luck is mounting so don't be afraid to play the odds and find a way to take that long overdue vacation. This hectic nonstop pace seems never-ending.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Involve yourself in real estate or redecorating. Help others in a practical and timely manner. Changes at work will prove beneficial even if it doesn't appear that way right now.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Romance is in the air. Your partner won't take no for an answer. You need the break anyway, and your relationship will be closer.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You must put your energy into your work. If you do a good job, it will be hard for an opponent to stand in your way. Your intensity and cooperation are hard to beat.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't be afraid to tell that special person how much you care. Financial opportunities and contracts should prove to be prosperous. Take some short trips in search of information.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Stick to what you do best and don't make proclamations about subjects that you have absolutely no clue about. Follow through on a moneymaking idea that you have researched thoroughly. Your partner may be emotional if you want to spend joint funds.

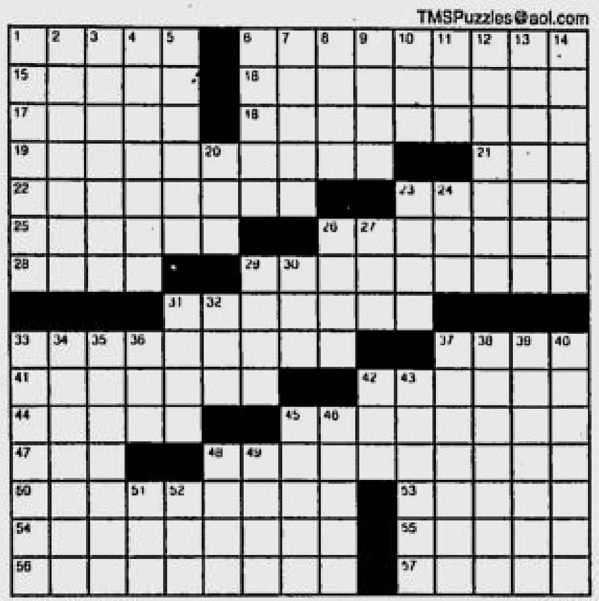
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Spend time with friends and don't let trivial annoyances at work get you down or ruin your day. Your renewed discipline makes this a superb day to start a diet or an exercise program.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Start to save your hard-earned cash. You've always given in to others. Remember, charity begins at home. If you are too generous, you will be the one who is left short.

Birthday Baby: Your insightful manner will put others at ease. You are curious in a practical way. You'll have a variety of interests and be popular throughout life.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com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By Tom Pruce
Chicago, IL

8/18/01

ACROSS
- 1 Bring up the rear
- 6 Game played against steps
- 15 Natural hair-coloring
- 16 Professional associate
- 17 Boot out
- 18 Inspiring warm sympathy
- 19 Isolation
- 21 __ Aviv-Jaffa
- 22 Like cloisonne
- 23 Die down
- 25 Flirtatious lookers
- 26 George and Bud
- 28 Loch in the Caledonian Canal
- 29 Window-cleaning equipment
- 31 Quantities
- 33 Chuck Yeager, e.g.
- 37 Worn out
- 41 Too quickly
- 42 Way around
- 44 Bird that eats feathers
- 45 Nelson Eddy's MacDonald
- 47 Lobster eggs
- 48 Airs
- 50 Henry James novel, with "The"
- 53 Zones
- 54 Make germfree
- 55 Slithering hisser
- 56 Sang love songs
- 57 __ Park, CO

DOWN
- 1 Upon that
- 2 Retaliation
- 3 Critters
- 4 Profits
- 5 Second of two mentioned
- 6 Subdivision of an act
- 7 Added some shading
- 8 Pioneer car maker
- 9 Bullring cheers
- 10 Shell-game item
- 11 Courtroom railing
- 12 Unsettle
- 13 Crescent-shaped opening
- 14 Like a collapsed card table
- 20 Golfer Ernie
- 23 Vigoda and Lincoln
- 24 Cranberry patch
- 26 Greene novel, "Travels with My __"
- 27 Money on the line
- 29 Flatfish
- 30 Status __
- 31 Church section
- 32 Cambridge sch.
- 33 Jungle cat
- 34 Along the way
- 35 More inclined
- 36 Slot-filler
- 37 Thomas __ Eliot
- 38 Position under scrutiny
- 39 Blooper
- 40 Locks and shocks
- 42 Mom's partner
- 43 Containerize
- 45 Musician Spike
- 46 Palliated
- 48 Composer Bartok
- 49 Surprise attack
- 51 Mine vein
- 52 Brooch

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

S	A	P	S	■	D	D	A	Y	■	S	T	A	F	F
P	L	O	P	■	A	O	N	E	■	P	A	N	E	L
A	S	E	A	■	R	U	T	S	■	O	U	T	D	O
N	O	T	H	I	N	G	I	S	E	I	T	H	E	R
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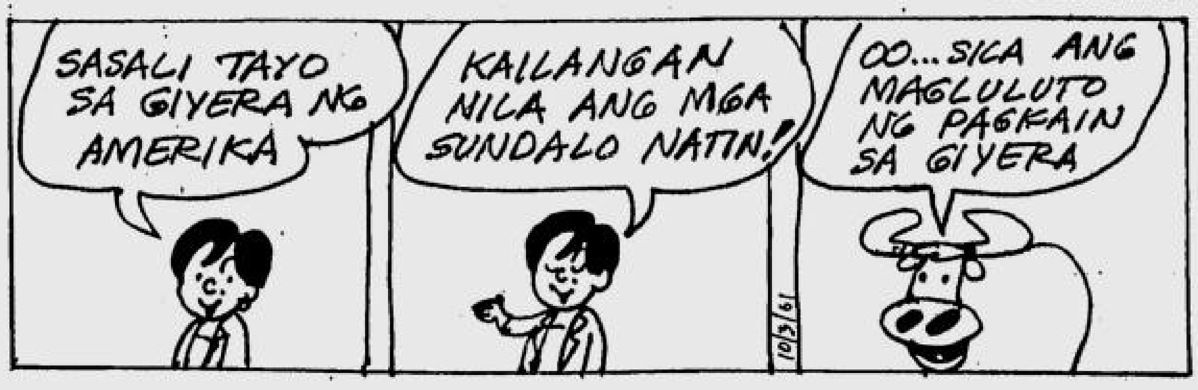
8/18/01

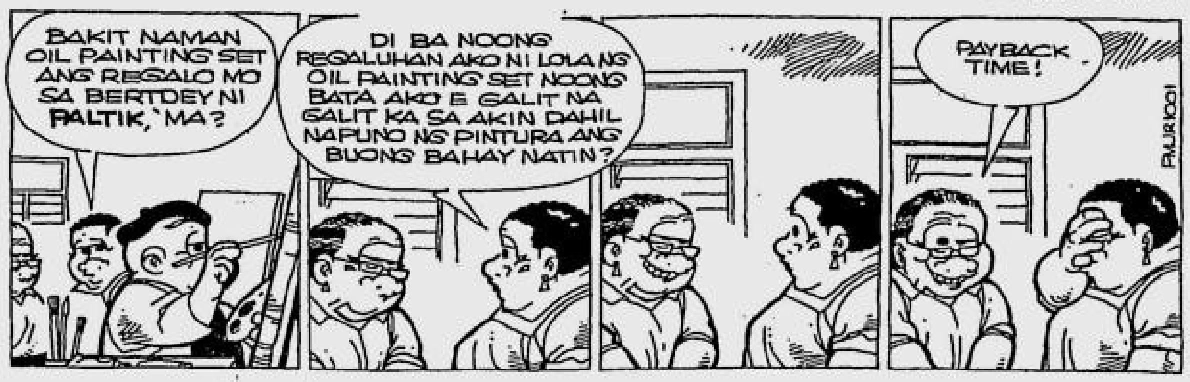
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


SASALI TAYO SA GIYERA NG AMERIKA
KAILANGAN NILA ANG MGA SUNDALO NATIN!
10/3/01
OO... SIGA ANG MAGLULUTO NG PAGKAIN SA GIYERA

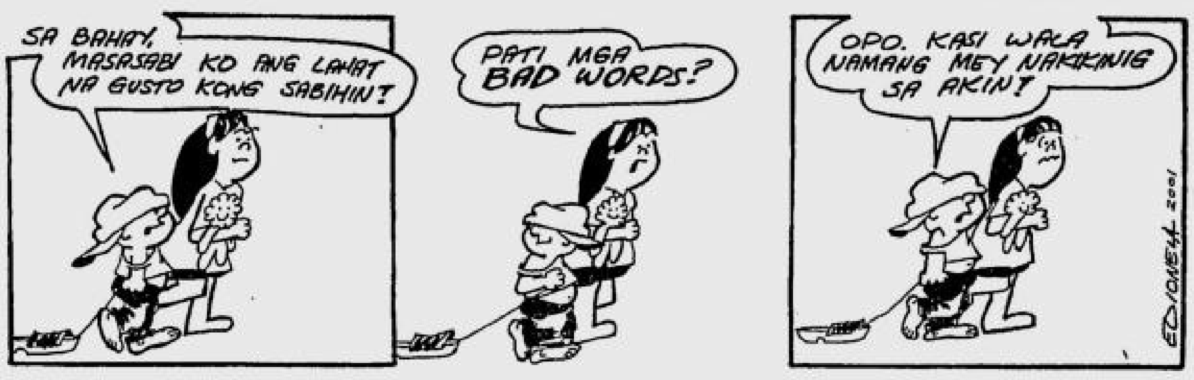
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


BAKIT NAMAN OIL PAINTING SET ANG REGALO MO SA BERTDEY NI PALTIK, 'MA?
DI BA NOONG REGALUHAN AKO NI LOLA NG OIL PAINTING SET NOONG BATA AKO E GALIT NA GALIT KA SA AKIN DAHIL NAPUNO NG PINTURA ANG BUONG BAHAY NATIN?
PAYBACK TIME!
PMJR1001

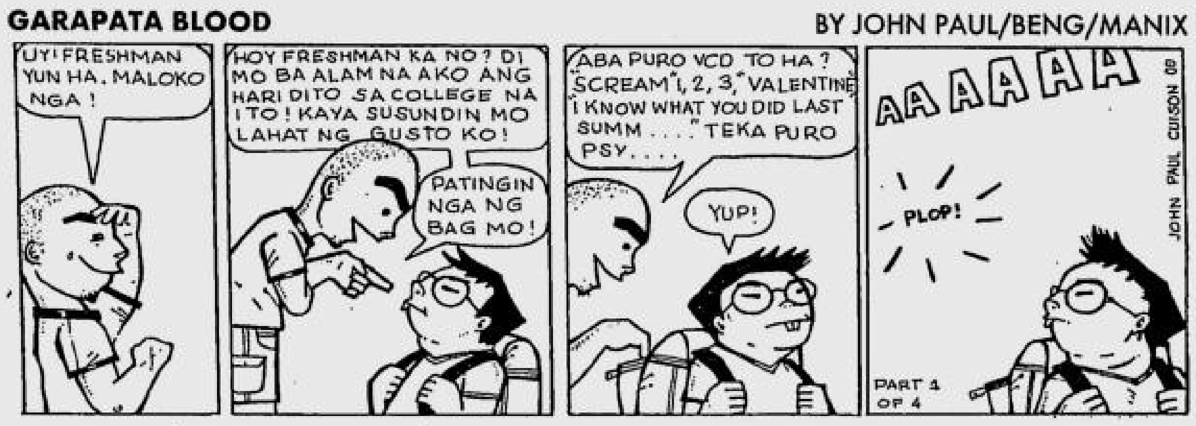
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


SA BAHAY, MASASABI KO ANG LAHAT NA GUSTO KONG SABIHIN!
PATI MGA BAD WORDS?
OPO. KASI WALA NAMANG MEY NAKIKINIG SA AKIN!
EDIONELA 2001

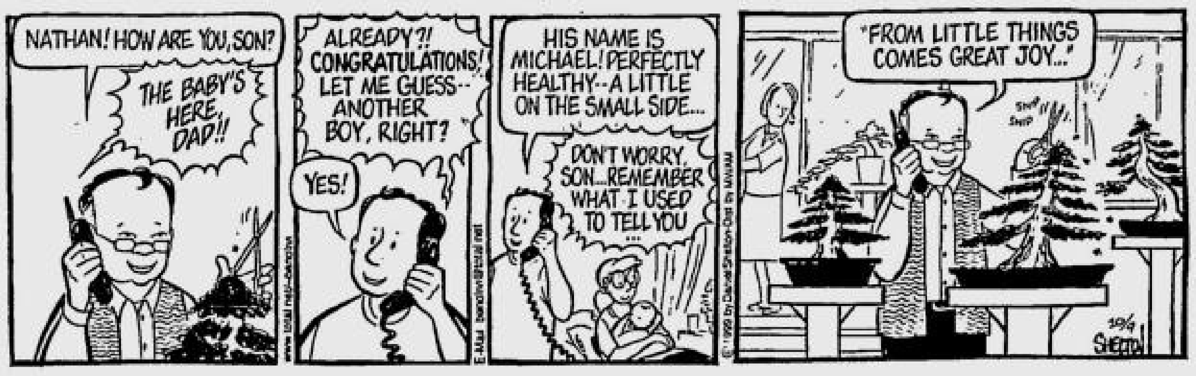
GARAPATA BLOOD

BY JOHN PAUL/BENG/MANIX


UY! FRESHMAN YUN HA. MALOKO NGA!
HOY FRESHMAN KA NO? DI MO BA ALAM NA AKO ANG HARI DITO SA COLLEGE NA ITO! KAYA SUSUNDIN MO LAHAT NG GUSTO KO!
PATINGIN NGA NG BAG MO!
ABA PURO VCD TO HA? "SCREAM" 1, 2, 3," VALENTINE," I KNOW WHAT YOU DID LAST SUMM...." TEKA PURO PSY....
YUP!
AAAAAA
PLOP!
PART 1 OF 4
JOHN PAUL CUISON 01

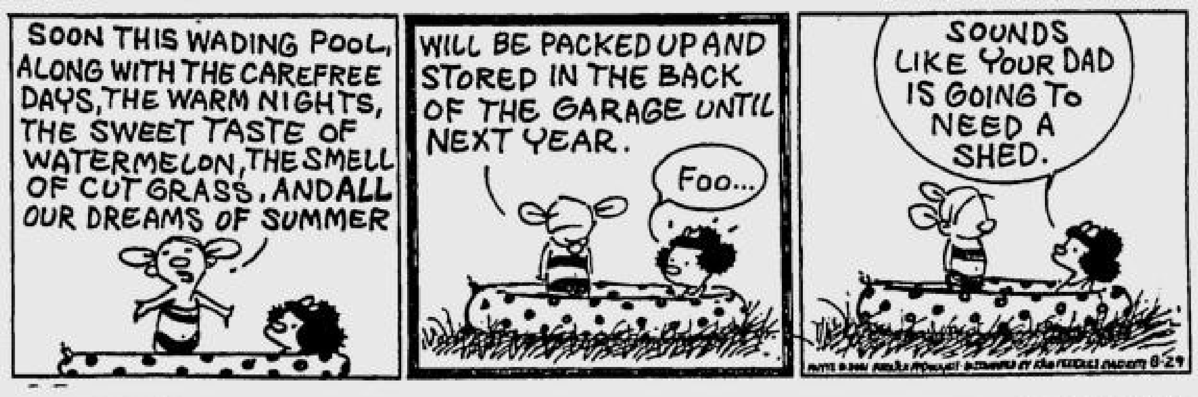
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


NATHAN! HOW ARE YOU, SON?
THE BABY'S HERE, DAD!!
ALREADY?! CONGRATULATIONS! LET ME GUESS-- ANOTHER BOY, RIGHT?
YES!
HIS NAME IS MICHAEL! PERFECTLY HEALTHY--A LITTLE ON THE SMALL SIDE...
DON'T WORRY, SON...REMEMBER WHAT I USED TO TELL YOU...
"FROM LITTLE THINGS COMES GREAT JOY..."
SNIP SNIP
10/4
SHELTON

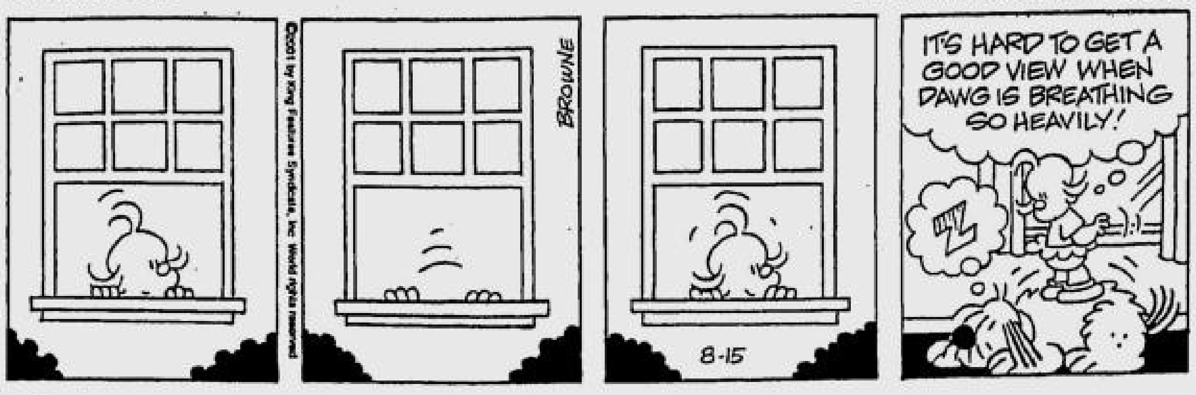
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SOON THIS WADING POOL, ALONG WITH THE CAREFREE DAYS, THE WARM NIGHTS, THE SWEET TASTE OF WATERMELON, THE SMELL OF CUT GRASS, AND ALL OUR DREAMS OF SUMMER
WILL BE PACKED UP AND STORED IN THE BACK OF THE GARAGE UNTIL NEXT YEAR.
Foo...
SOUNDS LIKE YOUR DAD IS GOING TO NEED A SHED.
8-29

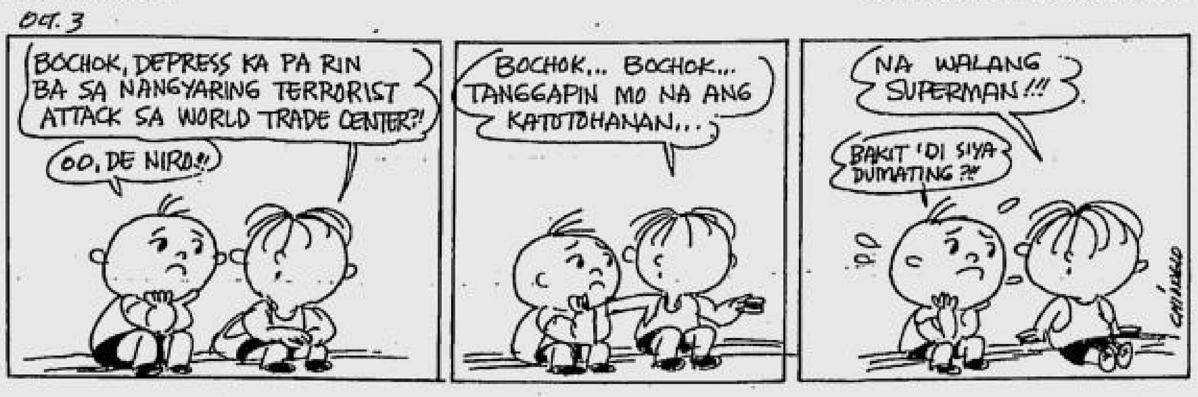
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


BROWNE
8-15
IT'S HARD TO GET A GOOD VIEW WHEN DAWG IS BREATHING SO HEAVILY!

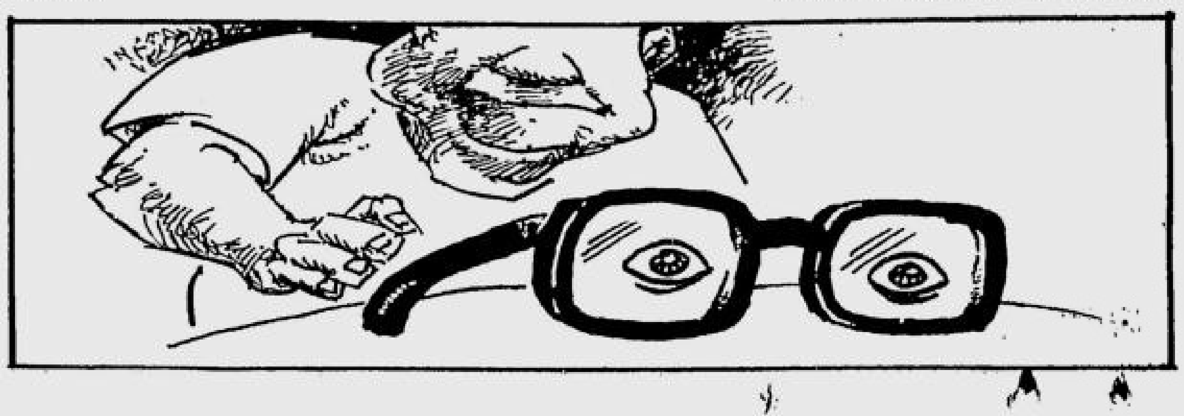
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


Oct. 3
BOCHOK, DEPRESS KA PA RIN BA SA NANGYARING TERRORIST ATTACK SA WORLD TRADE CENTER?!
OO, DE NIRO!!
BOCHOK... BOCHOK... TANGGAPIN MO NA ANG KATOTOHANAN...
NA WALANG SUPERMAN!!!
BAKIT 'DI SIYA DUMATING ?!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING



Taking in MTV Awards and WTC attack in the same week

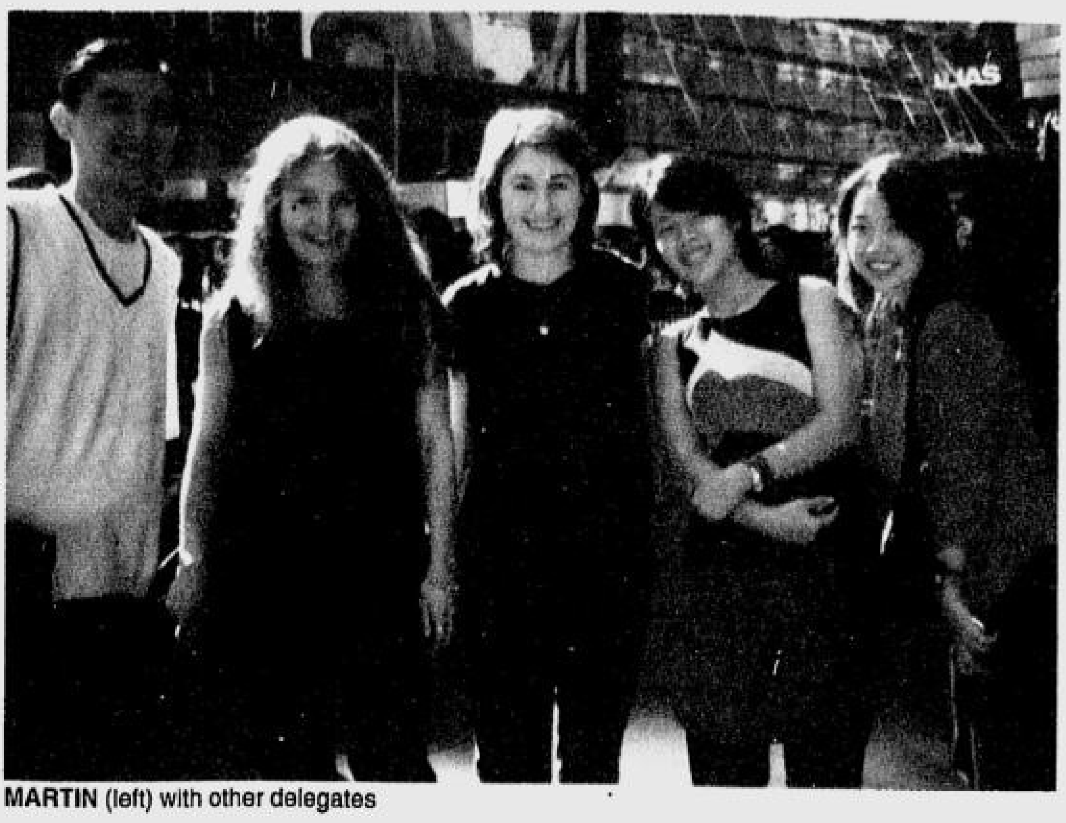
Martin won a ticket to the show we've been waiting for and a glimpse up close of the attacks we've been avoiding lately

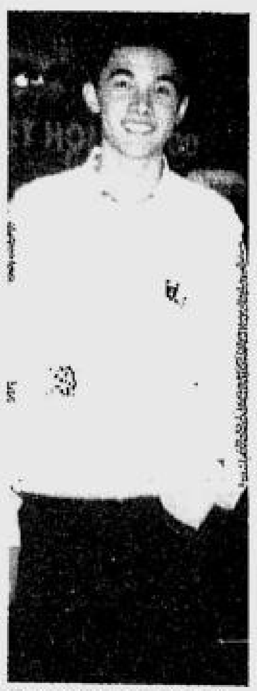
BY TAMMY DAVID
2bU! Correspondent

NEXT to the Oscars, another popular and much-awaited awards show among us teens is the MTV Video Music Awards (VMAs). Every year we watch out for radical fashions in the red carpet, the performances of hot artists and unexpected moments in true MTV fashion and, of course, the video of the year award.

While the rest of us were watching the 2001 awards on television last month, lucky 21-year-old Martin Cervantes had a seat inside the MET, the prize for his winning entry to the MTV VMAs contest. The R&B fanatic from De La Salle University saw, among others, U2, N'Sync and the King of Pop, Michael Jackson, Linkin Park, J.Lo, Missy Elliot and... oh, Britney Spears, in the flesh.

Cervantes also got to explore a bit of New York on his own after the show but got stranded because of the (yup, you guessed it) World Trade Center attacks. I asked to share with us his experience in the VMAs and the movie-like terror in NYC.


MARTIN (left) with other delegates


EAT YOUR HEART OUT: Martin getting ready for the big night

How did you find out you won?

I was in a FEU-La Salle game (UAAP Basketball). I saw on my cell phone a number I did not know. It was a landline. I returned the call and asked, "Who's this?" and the girl said, "Who's this?" I replied, "This is Martin and you called my cell phone." Then a girl named Criselle talked to me and said, "Hi, this is Criselle from MTV." As soon as she said those three letters, I was like "Anjo! (a friend beside him) MTV! MTV!" I found out I was a finalist. And Anjo said, "You're one lucky... bleep."

So all of the finalists went to the taping of "Morning TV" and VJ Sarah Meier announced my name and the first thing I did was hug Pam, my close friend, who also happened to be a finalist (she accompanied Cervantes to New York).

What did you do in your video entry?

I made a spoof of Madonna's "Don't Tell me." I bribed a girl from class and literally dragged her to the audiovisual room of the school. I filmed the skyway ahead of time since the background of Madonna's video was a highway. I brought it to school and played it on the projector. We had to beg the audio technician to let us use the room since the place was closing. We did the song and the dance number complete with the paraphernalia of Nescafé and "Morning TV" banners. It was a good thing my Dad had a cowboy hat. I was the one singing most of the time so we were like "Send Us to NYC to see N'Sync, Eminem and Britney..." On the day of the interview, VJ Sarah kept on calling me Madonna Cervantes and then the other finalist, Mon (who happened to be Martin's schoolmate), danced to "It's Raining Men."

No way!

He really danced to "It's Raining Men" and I thought he was going to win hands down.

What was he wearing? (Ginger Spice was wearing a two-piece in the video)

He was wearing black, tight-fitted shirt and tight pants and every time we see him in school, we'd sing, "It's Raining Men."

Who or what were you looking forward to at the awards?

I was really looking forward to seeing Britney Spears. (Grins)

Britney Spears?! Over U2 or Dave Matthews?

I think you would understand a guy's point of view, why he'd like to see Britney Spears. You don't care about her, you don't care about her dance moves...You care about what she's wearing! And the thing is KC [Montero] and I were kidding. I was like: "I hope she'd wear the same thing as last year's" and KC was like: "She'd probably wear less." His prediction was sooo right. She was wearing a belly dancer's get up.

She was just wearing a snake...

That's it! And I was like, (Drops his jaws) "Uh-huh... Okay!" and it was the last performance. The audience was screaming but most of the screams were really for the...

Snake?

No, for the performance of N'Sync and Michael Jackson 'cause when Michael Jackson appeared everybody just stood up.

Did you get any pictures or autographs?

The closest thing I got to a star was with J.Lo since one of the delegates screamed. J.Lo waved at us and we were all like, "Oh my God! Oh my God! J.Lo waved at us!," and a guy from Mudvayne was right behind me.

What was your favorite part of the show?

Missy Elliot with Nelly Furtado etc., J.Lo and Ja-rule and, of course...

Britney?

U2! They didn't show it here: They had a technical difficulty. The stage didn't work well. Staind also performed, which wasn't shown here. They had a great performance.

What got your vote in the Best Video award?

I was actually gunning for Fatboy Slim. I mean, to get Christopher Walken dancing is a miracle. And Eminem's "Stan." I was really disappointed. Eminem wasn't there. "Stan" is like one of my favorite songs of all time. When everybody was into "The Real Slim Shady," I was already into "Stan." The incorporation of the video and the story was good.

Anything we missed out here?

The American Viewers Choice Awards where N'Sync won. The thing is they had the same contest but it was called "The Last Fan Standing" and a black girl and Filipino guy won. They got to present the award and when N'Sync won, the guy really danced!

Pinoy *talaga*...

Yeah, I was like "*Pinoy talaga 'to.*"

When were you scheduled to fly back home?

Friday afternoon. I got to extend my trip and I stayed with my aunt who happened to be a flight attendant of guess what? Saudia. So I was able to move my flight to Sept. 12...

Uh-oh... Was it a big mistake? Any regrets?

I mean, it was really worth it with the VMAs. There were definitely no regrets. I was able to do almost everything in NYC—clubbing, shopping and sight-seeing... Even getting to know other contest winners and people in the clubs and bars I went to. I turned 21 last July and it was a very great experience to take care of my aunt's house when she had to fly. Basically, I was independent for a couple of days. I learned how the subway worked, shopped alone, went clubbing with my friends, etc. The only thing that was disappointing was the WTC attack. I've been there and all, but I really felt that NYC wasn't complete without the Twin Towers. I also wished I had more shopping money!

Where were you when the World Trade Center was attacked?

We were going to Manhattan to shop. We were several blocks from the buildings, which we saw burning. As soon as we knew there was something wrong, we got a cab and went home but seeing one of the buildings go down... We only learned it was a terrorist attack when we saw the news on TV. It was really sad.

Would you still like to go to the European music awards?

Definitely! I'd love to I mean, who wouldn't?

Thanks to Charley Bautista of MTV Philippines. Visit www.mtvasia.com

E-mail chris_trent_thom@lycos.com

BULLETIN BOARD

Your wish is 2bU!'s command

WE want to make your dream come true. Because you've been such good readers, we'd like to do something for you. Share with us your greatest wish—whether it's to meet your favorite celebrity or go behind the scenes of your favorite TV show or absolutely anything—and we'll see what we can do. Drop us a line or snail-mail us at the address below.

Do you want to appear on these pages? Tell on your boyfriend—his 'baduy porma' and 'kadiri' pick-up line—and you're made

Make your boyfriend your paper doll

Sick of the way he dresses? Tired of his old T-shirt and ratty jeans ensemble? This might just be your chance to make your boyfriends over. Send us a picture of your cutie, tell us your love story and why you think your honey needs a makeover. If you're chosen as one of the three couples, you will be featured in 2bU!

Worst "ligaw" styles

Girls, share with us the worst ways guys tried to make you fall for them. We want to know the cheesiest lines and the most *baduy* moves they've made on you. Send your stories with your pictures and get a chance to be featured.

Hangover stories

Guys, it's your turn. Tell us about your worst alcohol-fraught experiences. If you're not too embarrassed, send your pictures in, too. Keep them pouring in.

You can e-mail us at ls_2bU@inquirer.com.ph, fax 897-4793 or snail-mail us at 2bU!, PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. We'll be waiting until Oct. 10.

Lung cancer or gaining weight

MAKEOVER 911
Kinny Salas

DURING high school and college, the "naughty" girls started sneaking in bathrooms to smoke. I knew most would be addicted and only a few would quit.

What surprised me were the girls who started during their late 20s, when "cool" was no longer the greatest priority. I interviewed them out of curiosity and their reason was weight control. A lot of us start gaining weight in our mid-20s due to slowing down of metabolism or lifestyle changes.

How much weight exactly do most people gain when they stopped smoking? Seventy percent who quit will gain an average of 10-12 pounds within a year, but one in seven women and one in 10 men will gain at least 30 pounds.

It is possible to gain even if you don't eat a single calorie more than you did as a smoker. Those who smoke a pack a day will slow down their metabolism by about 200 calories a day. When you smoke, you burn more fat in your diet and more fat from your fat cells, so you stay 10-12 pounds below the weight you should be if you don't smoke. Those who quit increase fat storage and some even carbo storage, which leads to water retention. You will have cravings for sweets which smoker's taste buds distort. Food flavor will now be enhanced and so your appetite goes haywire.

How then can someone who wants to quit avoid getting fat?

A lot of people quit smoking first then try to deal with weight gain later. Of course, they end up frustrated because after six to eight weeks of exercising religiously they not only lose weight but also end up heavier before they quit. Those who diet and exercise end up sneaking sticks not only to satisfy nicotine craving but to watch their weight plummet with the combination of diet and exercise. What should be done: Get ready first, then quit.

What does getting ready entail? Lessen the sticks you smoke a day first then switch to a low-fat diet to compensate for the future increase of your metabolic rate and start an exercise program, which you will need to burn off the excess fat and carbo in your diet. You keep a diet and exercise records for a couple of weeks.

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

As you get into it, change the diet and exercise plan slowly and carefully because you will have to live with this for the rest of your life. At first, new nonsmokers can't figure out what to do with their hands. Most difficult is walking into the party and encountering your smoking gang. It's a whole reorganization to life.

When people suddenly quit smoking, all these encounters in everyday life is a big deal. Spend time to do a little something each day to prepare yourself. When you decide you are ready to stop, it's easier. Warm up for about two weeks (this should be your maximum deadline for no more cigarettes). Rule is you have to smoke fewer sticks per day and cut to half of usual consumption on day one.

On the beauty aspect, quitting smoking will not only extend your life but also make your face, skin and teeth look their best. Nicotine blocks oxygen circulation, which is responsible for blotchy, darker and sallower skin. It stains teeth and makes one prone to wrinkles around the mouth and eyes. A lot of us are immune to lung cancer lectures, so let me at least appeal to your vanity.

For any questions, or products you want to road test, write to Makeover 911, PDI Lifestyle or fax at 897-4805

Collection brings back '80s look

THE '80S makes a comeback with Giordano's Simply Preppy collection.

From multistripe designs to pastel colors, rugby shirts to webbing belts, everything suggests funk while maintaining today's simple tone. After the solid prints of last month's collection, this month's series brings back stretch tops and bottoms. Giordano also incorporates more stripes in its design.

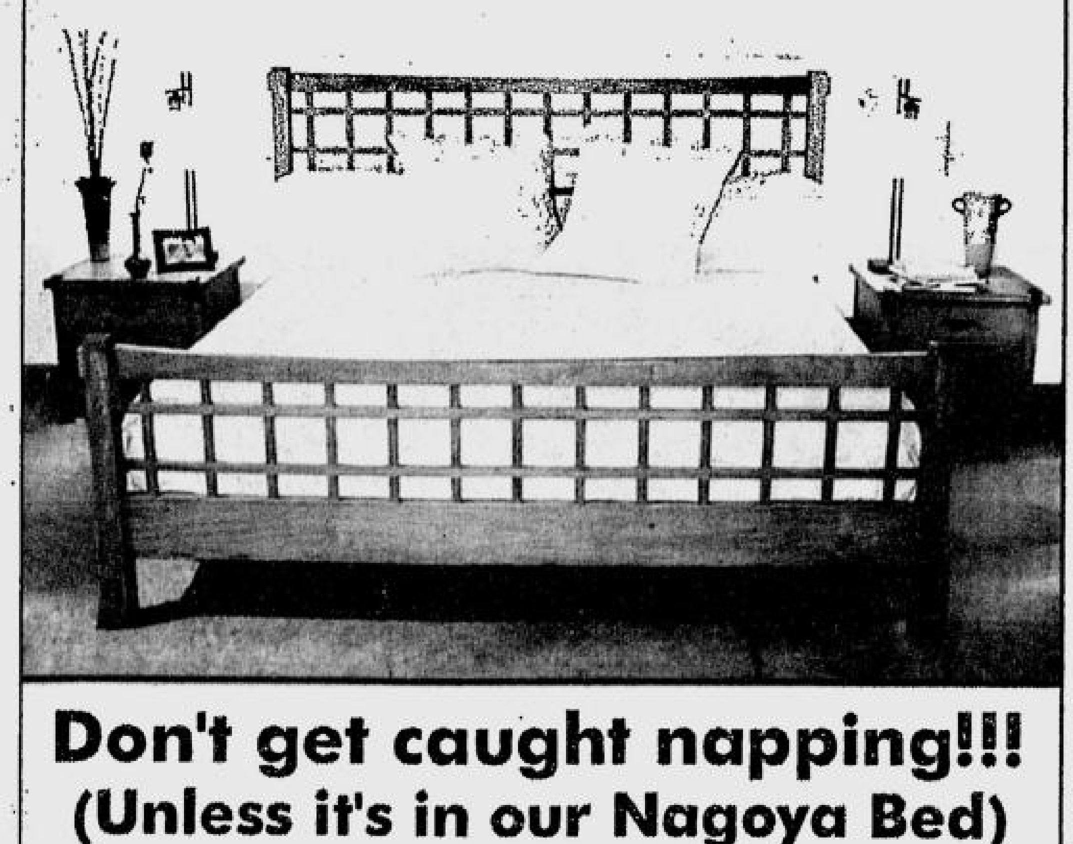
Pink is fashion's hottest color at the moment and Giordano offering it in varied shades. The rugby shirt returns with a more modern, clean and active approach although still with the same sporty and mass appeal. Instead of the old baggy and regular fit, the latest design for men has a slimmer cut and three-fourth sleeves in place of the regular-cut sleeves. The rugby shirts' feminine version also has more figure-fit cuts to create the attractive, shapely contour. The right mix and match of outfits and blending of colors achieves the preppy look, appealing both to young and old, and to students and yuppies alike.

Jeans for girls also take on the daring side with Giordano's boot cut, low-rise designs. The sexy, hip-hugging fits can be perfectly matched with cotton or stretch webbing belts that come in colorful, multistripe designs.

"We incorporated the '80s look with more emphasis on styling detail. It is more of the '80s without being outdated, since the present trend calls for basic and clean styles. We innovate through the use of pastel colors for a more prominent and preppy look," said Grace Suarez, Giordano (Phils.) product development specialist.

Giordano's latest collection successfully blends comfort, simplicity and quality catering to today's new breed of consumers.

Habitat: Exhibit 2001
Just one week left.



Don't get caught napping!!!
(Unless it's in our Nagoya Bed)
The Nagoya and other brand new lines now available...
Habitat 26 YEARS
Pines corner Sheridan in Mandaluyong 636 5141 636 4115

FLOWER CHILDREN Raymond Rufino and Anna Palabyab

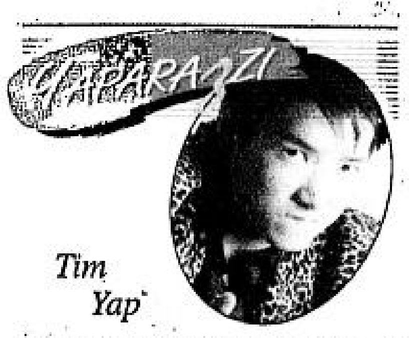
FLORAL PATCH. Henri Calayag and interior designer Jun Jun Ablaza

BENCH FIXED. Endorser Diether Ocampo and Ben Chan

EL CIRKULO. Pazzy Navarro in Rajo Laurel

PHOTOS BY TIM YAP

Quick fix for slow times



Tim Yap

"I NEED a change, feel like getting a hair cut," said my style-file friend one day as he was going by through a depression brought about the recent developments in the world and in his love life.

"Go ahead, change is always good," I said. "And while you're at it, take a short vacation, too," I advised him as we entered the halls of the Rockwell cinema to view the VIP screening of "La Vida Rosa," hosted by Bench Fix (their line of hair products and salons) and Star Cinema.

His drab mood suddenly transformed when he reached the cinema, of course after going through the bouncers, the red carpet and the receptionists. "I've never seen a Pinoy movie event this chi-chi," said a movie writer. "This is how it should be done." Set up à la Hollywood premiere, the "pink chic fete" had giant tents with satin cabbage roses set up expertly by interior designer **Jun Jun Ablaza**.

Countless pink lanterns, feathers and faux fur adorned the lobby, straight out of Ablaza's "Moulin Rosa" fantasy for the Bench Fix premiere event for 300 of Manila's "most beautiful." Upon entry, guests were given fuchsia rose corsages, specially made by designer **Michele Sison**, giving the audience a bright-colored uniform, inspired by "Sex & The City."

Other diversions were provided by a mime artist, along with statuesque guys and gals, also clad in passionate pink creations of Sison, **Rhett Eala** and **Rajo Laurel**. Sumptuous passarounds were from 9501, that tony resto owned by the ABS group.

The great escape

One by one, the stars arrived. From the film's leads stars **Rosanna Roces** and Bench Fix endorser **Diether Ocampo** to society-philes **Margie Moran-Floirendo**, **Mons Romulo-Tantoco**, fashion retail innovator (not imitator, unlike others) **Ben Chan** himself and the film's feisty director **Chito Roño**. It was one big mix of aristocracy from both elite and glitz biz.

Just as my friend was feeling better, the movie started. For someone who does not watch Filipino films, he stayed all throughout the motion picture, a dramatization of the plight of Bonnie and Clyde types. "The movie was great, a bit depressing though," said a newspaper insider.

Other people enjoyed it immensely, laughing at every punch line or irony the leads would throw at them. "Great escape from my office work," said my weary friend, thanking me for the night's invitation. "I think I'll get a haircut tomorrow."

SISTERS IN STYLE. Ces Drilon and Joyce Stalder

NEW KID ON HER BLOCK. Jay La'o with manager Girlie Rodis

LA VIDA ROSANNA. Rosanna Roces in Hollywood glam

TESSA UNPLUGGED. Without makeup and still beautiful, here with hubby Dennis Valdes

'Oktober' festivities

TODAY marks the opening of the MAC boutique in Manila at Rustan's.

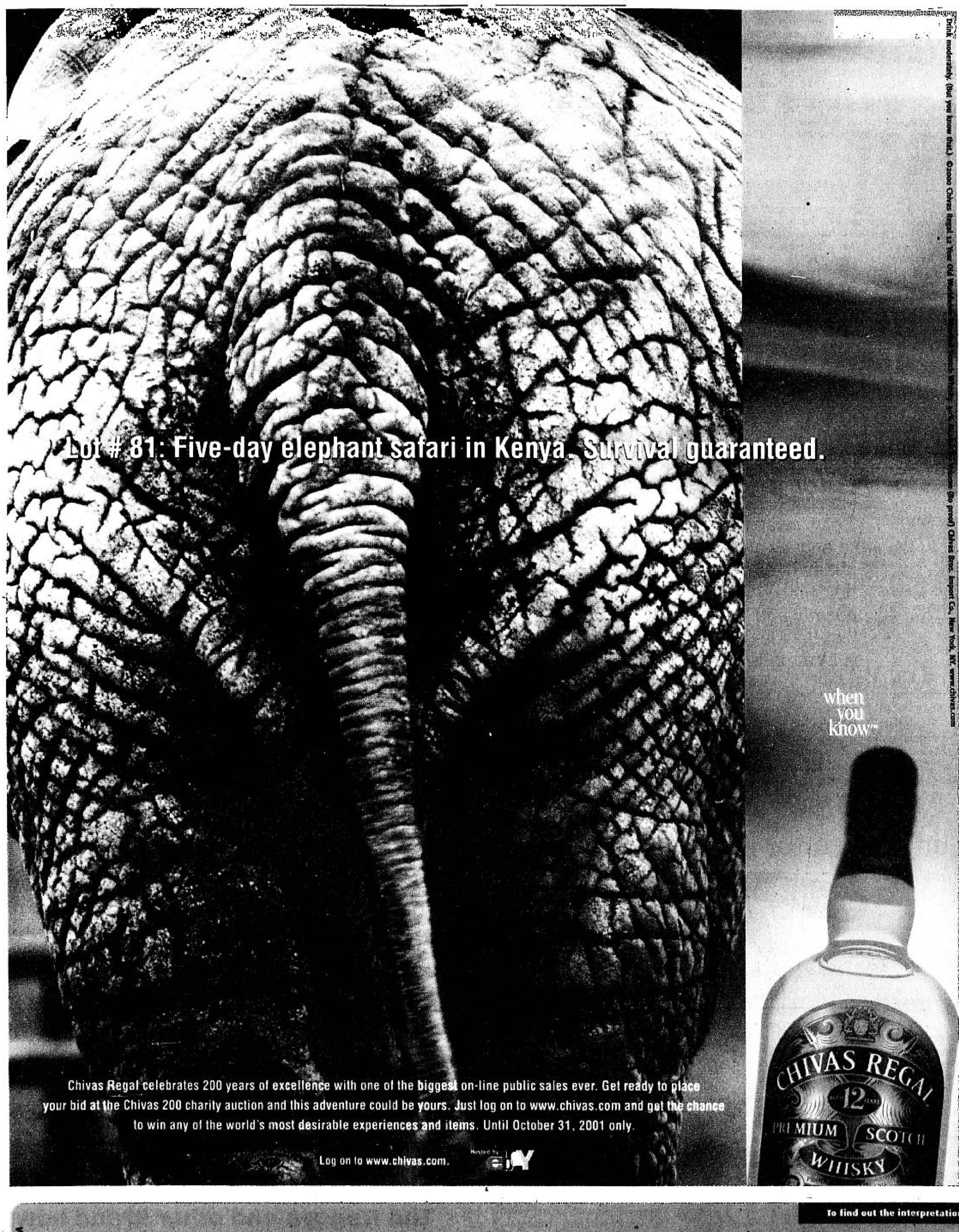
Tonight, put on your dancing shoes and head to Libis for Culture Club's sound explosion with DJ **John Robinson** (yup, of '80s dance fame). Wednesdays and Fridays see him as Culture Club house resident.

"Retro @ Rockwell," the big shindig at the Rockwell covered courts, happens on Thursday with music by **Ramon Jacinto**, Spirit of 67 and other stars.

San Miguel Beer's "Oktoberfest" extravaganza will kick off this Friday at the Eastwood City Walk, with fun, fun, fun activities like "Billiards with Bata," band performances, and tons of free food and beer, under San Miguel's "Showtime Chowtime Caravan" slogan.

Saturday, think "red" as Wherelse launches "Rush"—their night devoted to house music. Owner **Marcel Crespo** is very excited about his new concept, which will give everyone a reason to visit the club on weekends. There's also his "Oasis" chill Fridays, fast developing a following among Manila's fickle club denizens.

Then Sunday, *the* **Inno Sotto** stages his fashion gala, an exclusive affair for the city's 300 most stylish people. It happens at the Edsa Shang.



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The Corrs stay on course toward stardom

By Maui V. Reyes
Photos by Romy Homillada

THE CORRS have sold 25 million records worldwide.

ANDREA Corr laughs as she holds a glass of *halo-halo*, "Yes, I'm wondering why this ice cream is purple."

It's a gloomy Saturday morning. The "stunning" scenery you could see from the hotel window was a building under construction. Inside the Admiral Suite of Discovery Suites in Ortigas where FWD Magazine was doing its cover shoot, everyone was perky. The Corrs were posing with local desserts.

"It's too early for dessert," Caroline says laughing when her turn came up.

The group is finally getting its share of the limelight and enjoying the moment. It has played small movie roles, opened for musicians like Celine Dion and sold 25 million records.

The Corrs journey to fame started in Dundalk, Ireland. Their musical parents encouraged the children to play various instruments at an early age. After appearing in the movie "The Commitments," they linked up with the film's music coordinator, John Hughes, who would eventually become their manager. In 1994, the group impressed the United States ambassador so much it was invited to play at the soccer World Cup celebration in Boston.

The Corrs cut their first album, "Forgiven, Not Forgotten," in 1995 with the help of hot-shot producer David Foster. A tour with Celine Dion followed. Andrea did a slight detour, working in Alan Parker's "Evita."

The group recorded its second album in 1997, "Talk on Corners," spawning four major hits, that included "Dreams," its version of the Fleetwood Mac classic as a tribute to the band. By then, the world was definitely listening.

The Vatican invited The Corrs to play at its Christmas concert. They performed with Pavarotti, opened for the Rolling Stones and recorded their "MTV Unplugged" album (where they sang REM's "Everybody Hurts" as a tribute to the victims of the Omagh bombing). Their fusion of folk, pop and Irish music along with lyrics about love lost and love found landed them on numerous charts and music countdowns across the globe.

The siblings would dedicate their third album, "In Blue," to their mother Jean who passed away during the recording. Mutt Lange coproduced the album, which has already sold four hit singles since its July 2000 release, with The Corrs.

People have started calling them "rock stars," implying they are musicians with a certain attitude. So what? They have come a long way from playing in dingy bars where people barfed in their hair and performing in places where people would not listen to a note they played.

As the pictorial continued, Andrea put on a black cardigan, plopped down on the sofa and fell silent. We were suddenly reminded of our little sisters who, at times, morph from adorable to spoiled rotten, putting her thumb in her mouth and watching people move around her. Caroline asked me where I wanted them to sit. I told them the sofa was fine, hoping not to start the conversation on the wrong foot. Sharon jokingly told the band to sit next to the widescreen TV.

> They've come a long way from playing in dingy bars where people barfed in their hair

"Let's go sit on the floor next to the TV," Andrea suggested, before giggling girlishly as her siblings sat down on the sofa, ready to talk about the album, playing live and the early years.

You have worked your butts off for years to get where you are now. How does it feel to finally make it?

Caroline: The thing is, it's not like this global thing happened in one night. It started in our hometown, and then in Australia, and then in England, and then the rest of the world. I think it's better to progress that way, and we know we worked really hard to get to where we are. If it was a really fast thing, you don't get to appreciate the hard work and everything that goes into [making music and performing].

Do you still work as hard as before?

Sharon: Not as hard… well, nearly as hard.

THE CORRS/ p.D2

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Hot Picks!

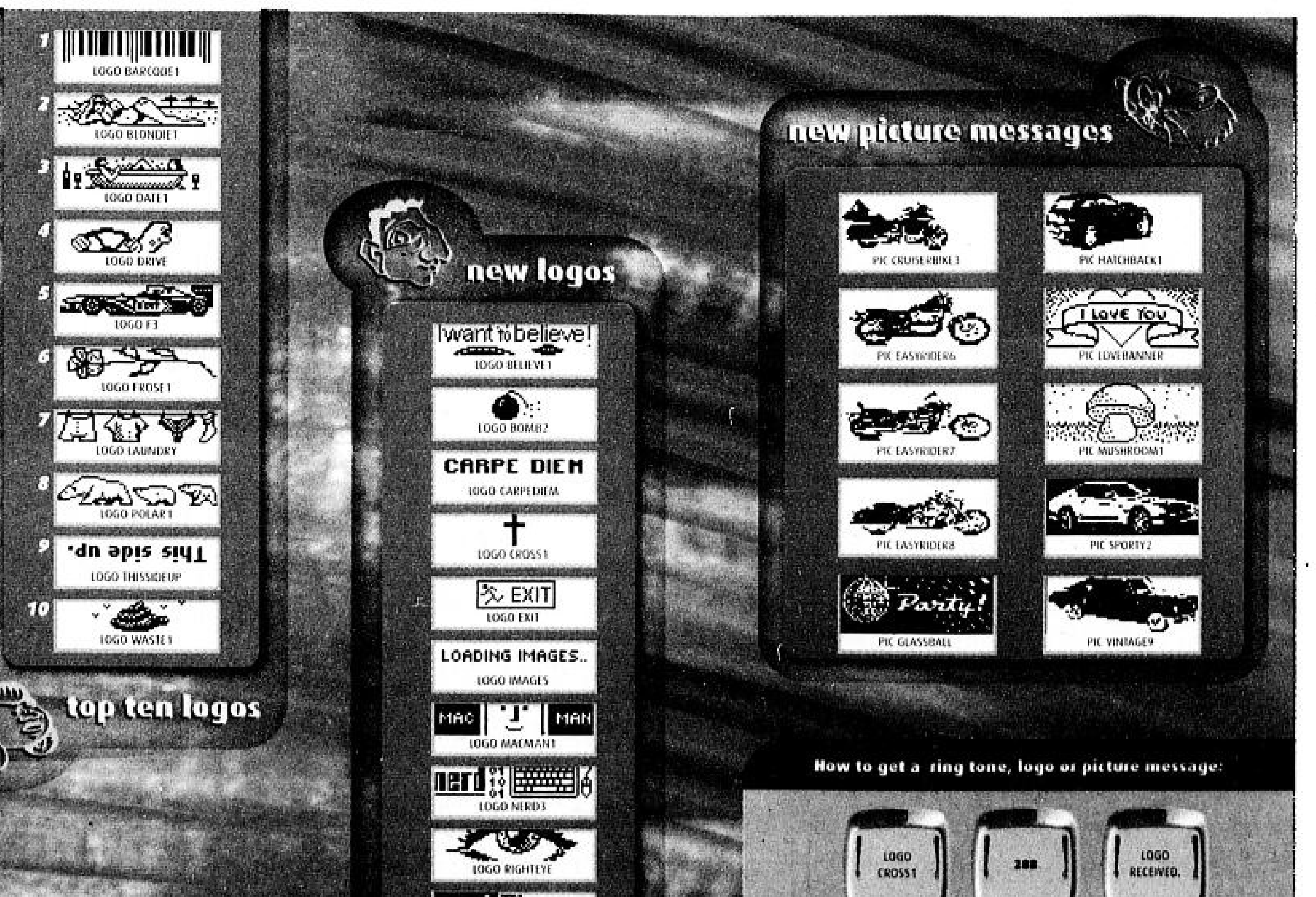
Take your pick from this week's freshest, choicest add-ons from Sept. 25 to Oct. 1 for **SMART Gold, SMART Buddy,** and **Talk 'N Text** subscribers. Download them today and get a chance to win prizes from Get zed! Get loaded! To register, type in **JOIN GETZ <name>/<address> and send to 288.** Check out this space next week for more ring tones, logos and picture messages from the zed Hot Picks.

new ring tones

TITLE	ARTIST	KEYWORD
In My Life	Beatles	TONE INMYLIFE
Strawberry Fields Forever	Beatles	TONE STRAWBERRY
We Can Work It Out	Beatles	TONE WECANWORK
With A Little Help From My Friends	Beatles	TONE WITHHELP
I Will	Beatles	TONE IWILL
I Feel Fine	Beatles	TONE IFEEL
Honey Pie	Beatles	TONE HONEYPIE
Help	Beatles	TONE HELP
Girl	Beatles	TONE GIRL
And I Love Her	Beatles	TONE ANDILOVE

top ten ring tones

	TITLE	ARTIST	KEYWORD
1	Fax Tone	zed	TONE FAX
2	Mobile Interference	zed	TONE GSM
3	Holiday	Madonna	TONE HOLIDAY
4	We Will Rock You	Queen	TONE ROCKYOU
5	Michelle	Beatles	TONE MICHELLE
6	Yesterday	Beatles	TONE YESTERDAY
7	That's Why	Gary Valenciano	TONE THATSWHY
8	Let It Be	Beatles	TONE LETITBE
9	It Wasn't Me	Shaggy	TONE WASNTME
10	Back At One	Brian McKnight	TONE BACKAT1



top ten logos
1 LOGO BARCODE1
2 LOGO BLONDIE1
3 LOGO DATE1
4 LOGO DRIVE
5 LOGO F3
6 LOGO FROSE1
7 LOGO LAUNDRY
8 LOGO POLAR1
9 LOGO THISSIDEUP
10 LOGO WASTE1

new logos
LOGO BELIEVE1
LOGO BOMB2
LOGO CARPEDIEM
LOGO CROSS1
LOGO EXIT
LOGO IMAGES
LOGO MACMAN1
LOGO NERD3
LOGO RIGHTEYE
LOGO ZED5

new picture messages
PIC CRUISERBIKE3
PIC HATCHBACK1
PIC EASYRIDER6
PIC LOVEBANNER
PIC EASYRIDER7
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PIC EASYRIDER8
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PIC VINTAGE9

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The Corrs stay on course toward stardom

SHARON. "We have always been involved in our music."

CAROLINE. Remembering an unforgettable experience in a bar.

ANDREA. "We're musicians. Playing live and writing are what come naturally to us."

JIM. Does behind-the-scenes in their music recording.

(From page D1)

Let's talk about "In Blue." What makes this album different from the others?

Andrea: It's progression. You know what I mean? We're two years older than the last album, two years older than what we've written before. We've had more experiences, a lot has happened, and we've played in an awfully lot of live shows. Those definitely have an impact in the way we write.

You produced some songs on your new album. Do you see an album produced solely by the band?

Sharon: Well, on the first album, Jim produced a lot of songs with David (Foster), so he's been doing a lot of behind-the-scenes things. We have always been involved in our music. I mean, we write the songs and we play them. But sometimes you have to let someone else handle your work.

Caroline: You couldn't be objective if you produce the entire album yourself.

Andrea: I think if you write the songs, you play the songs, you record the songs, and then expect to be objective when you produce the songs, that just won't happen. I think you'd be playing with the devil if you think you can do all that and still be objective. I mean, we're musicians, and playing live and writing are what come naturally to us, and that's why we stick to doing that. (To Jim who starts fanning himself with a fan he found on the table) Stop doing that, I can't see her. (Everyone becomes quiet. Andrea laughs before speaking again.) For producers, that's what comes naturally to them. Also, we are four in the band. That's too difficult because there are too many cooks. You need one person to go, "Okay, let's listen to this." Otherwise we'll all be confused and be going, "I'm not really sure," and each would want it to be this sound or that sound. So it would be really hard.

Do you have any requirements when recording or writing?

Sharon: I don't think so. Do you have any? (Looks at the others)

Caroline: Well, we've recorded everywhere, from a studio to a bedroom, where we used to record when we started out.

Andrea: I think what we always require is a comfortable space, somewhere we're comfortable in. Maybe there's a TV where one can watch while someone else is [recording] his or her part.

Let's talk about playing live. You've opened for other bands. What is, so far, the best act you've toured with?

Jim: I'd say U2. It was actually very nerve-wracking, I mean, just the fact that we would get to play on the same stage with them. But it worked out well. I think we even got a standing ovation in some of the shows we've done with them. They're really nice people and it was an honor to be able to tour with them.

And the worst live experience? (Everyone laughs)

Caroline: Oh, please, don't remind me!

Andrea: Okay, this was in the beginning when we were really, really desperate to get a break in Britain. I mean, this was our neighbor and we would try all the time to break in, but it would not happen. So once there was this radio show that had a party and we played. Everyone in the place was drunk and no one was listening. We got off the stage feeling horrible. You know, it was like when you are playing the piano in a hotel lobby and no one's really listening. We just felt really, really bad. And the place was filled with roaring drunks.

Caroline: And then one of the radio people was so drunk, he got sick in my hair! (Andrea giggles)

While you were playing?!

Andrea: No, after.

Caroline: It was sooo disgusting! I mean, I was mad that I was up on stage in that situation. Anyway, I was so mad that we were playing for these people who wouldn't listen, who weren't even interested in us, and then they got sick in my hair. That was just... (Makes a face that makes everyone laugh) It was just all of a sudden... gross!

Last question: Any guilty pleasures?

Andrea: (Eyes widen) Guilty pleasures?

Caroline: Wine.

Sharon: Yes, we all love wine.

Andrea: Yeah, I would say really good red wine. I love red wine.

And then get sick all over your sister's hair?

Andrea: (Laughs) No, not sick like that, no!

Jim: Red wine is nice.

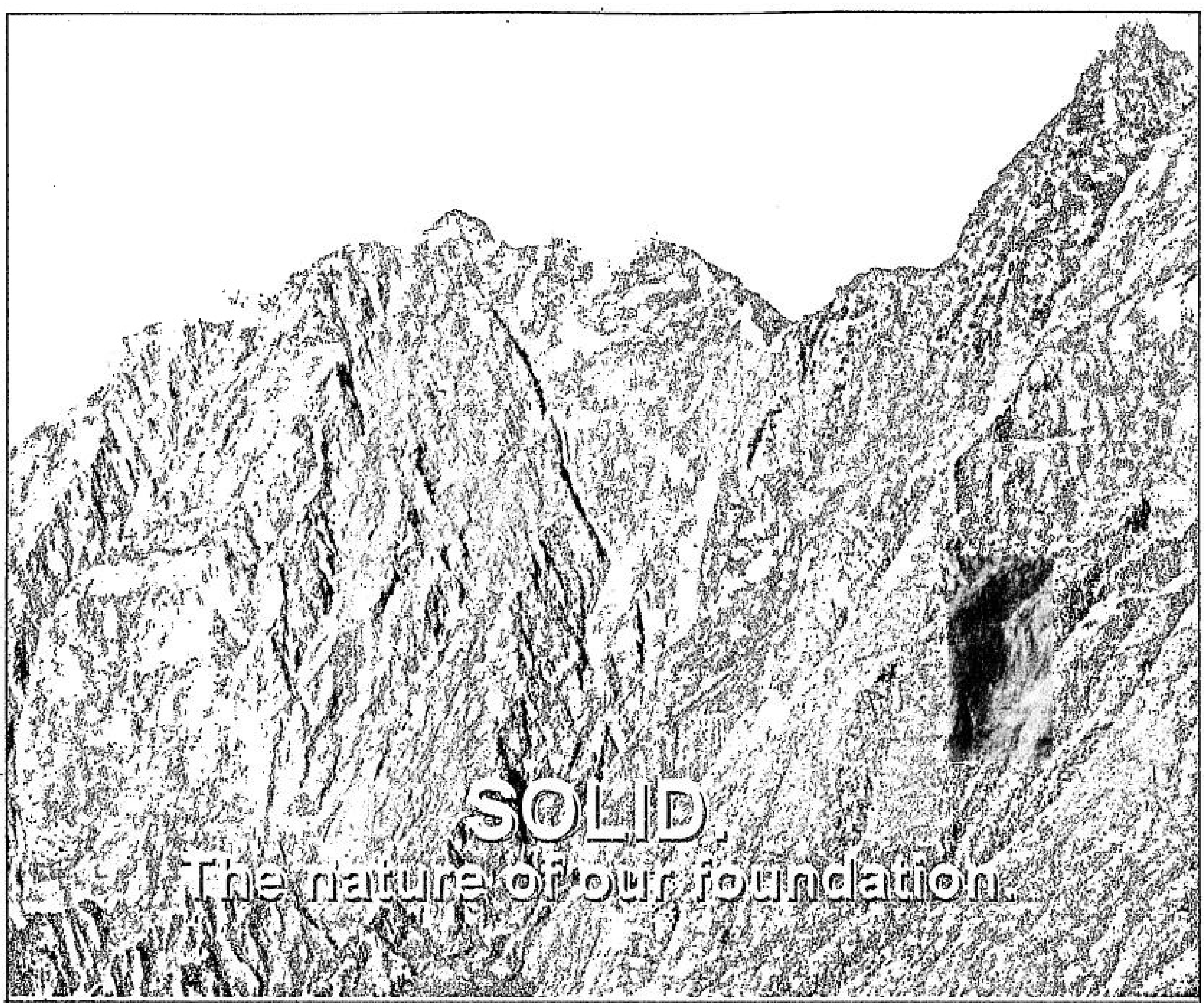
Lots of guitars for you, Jim?

Jim: No I don't, actually. I don't collect guitars. Actually I don't really have new ones. But anyway, I have guitars that have this distinct sound, but not a million guitars.

After signing a CD, The Corrs were escorted out of the room and to the café where a press conference would be held. More than 200 media people and fans were waiting, not counting those in the hotel lobby. They were rushed to a service elevator, which they said was not needed.

"We're not superstars, why can't we go the normal way?" they asked.

How we wish all "rock stars" were like them.



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Of mooncakes and bookends

By WALTER ANG

THE CHINESE Mid-Autumn Festival is always fun. At the very least, it gives you a day where you can pig out on great food. On a more formal note, this festival that falls on the 15th lunar day of the 8th lunar month is a day to think of family. Sometimes mistakenly called the Moon Festival, it is a day for reunions, with the round shape of the moon symbolizing family, abundance and prosperity.

If you think about it, a day where it's "official" to have fun with one's family isn't so bad now that the world isn't so cheerful. Chinoys (Filipinos of Chinese descent) around the country have a chance to bond and strengthen their cultural roots.

Kids get to play a popular dice game that involves confusing dice combinations that will either win you a dinky consolation prize (usually a ball pen) or the biggest, grandest pot of the day (which could be a new CD player if the sponsors are generous). Regardless of the prizes to be won, however, it's the coming together that's important.

What's most funny about the Mid-Autumn Fest (among other Chinoy celebrations) is that usually, most of my Pinoy friends are more excited about it than I am. They're the ones who are the first to look for mooncakes. Whenever the festival is just around the corner, morning greetings are punctuated with "And don't forget my mooncake!" All in good fun, of course.

Sweet treats

If you live in the Philippines, it's impossible not to know about mooncakes. Sweet treats that come in round-shaped bronze-colored pastries filled with sweet lotus seed or red bean paste. Tons of the stuff are sold in Chinatown a couple of weeks prior to the day of all days. Sidewalks are lined with metal tins and whatever new containers they've thought up to make the stuff more hip for the younger crowd. I've heard of mooncakes with cartoon character faces—I guess the novelty cake concept has spread to these kinds of sweets as well. People come in droves into the little streets of Ongpin in Chinatown and leave with bags or car trunks filled to the brim with the stuff.

As for my friends, I'm happy to oblige their requests for mooncakes. After all, food doesn't taste as good as when it's being shared with good friends and sprinkled with great conversation and stories.

Speaking of stories, there's a funny one about the ubiquitous fruitcake. There are only 10 fruitcakes in the whole world and that nobody really eats them. They just get circulated from one family to the next. There are times when I tend to think that the same might hold true for mooncakes.

Surplus

The first few pieces you get to eat are always fun, but once you realize you're left with a dozen or so of the stuff and you can't give them away anymore because it's too late, it's not so fun anymore. You have to endure several days' worth of eating mooncakes for breakfast, lunch and dinner just to finish off your surplus.

Sometimes, you have to think creatively to get rid of excess mooncakes. Of course, one can always go the altruistic and magnanimous route and donate to charitable organizations. Then, there's always your classmates, orgmates or officemates.

If you're having problems with one of your subjects, you can always give a couple to your teacher to help sweeten her disposition. Also, you can give one to your boss if you're positioning yourself for a raise. Just make sure you don't wait too long after the Mid-Autumn Festival, otherwise she'll figure out you're just using her to get rid of your leftovers. Her disposition may just turn sour instead of the desired sweet!

We could probably even contribute to the world of science using mooncakes. Scientists who study microscopic germs like *Neisseria gonorrhea, Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and *Aaron Carter* need to grow the germs first. They use a growing concoction they call "culture media." We all know what kind of stuff can grow on leftover food if you leave it out for too long (it's not a pretty sight), perhaps scientists can use it as a new kind of culture medium.

At the end of the day, if you still have a couple of cakes left, I suppose you could use them as hockey pucks, doorstops, paperweights or as fancy bookends. Happy Mid-Autumn Festival!

E-mail comments to waltzang@mail.com

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

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Review classes begin on Oct. 14, 1-5 p.m., at MSA review centers at Prince David Condominium, Katipunan; Golden Crescent Mansion, Loyola Heights, QC; Vista Verde Executive Village, Cainta; Filinvest Homes East, Antipolo; and the MSA Advance Institute, 315 Katipunan Road, QC.

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Concert fund-raiser for La Mesa Watershed Project

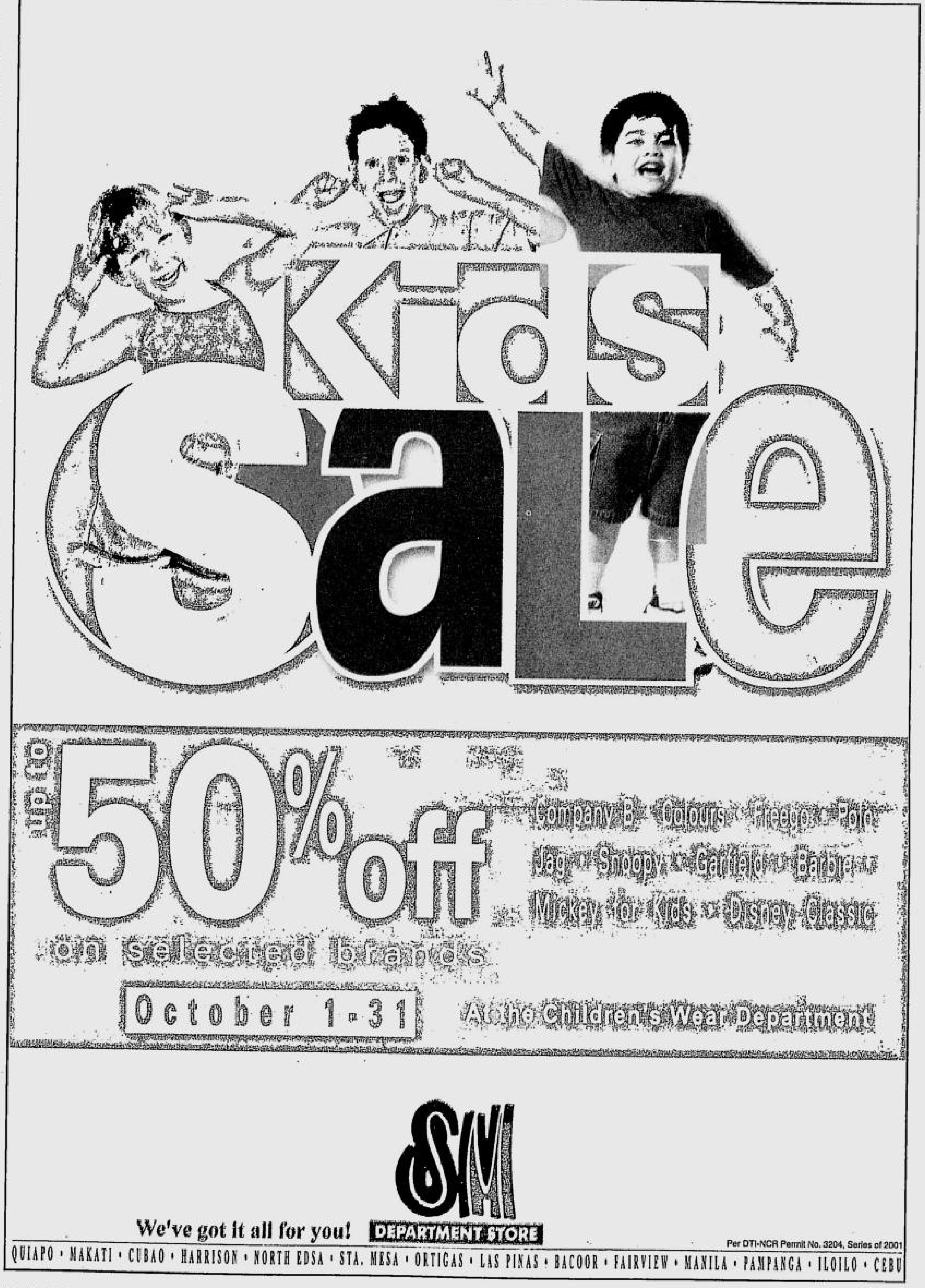
ROCKWELL Center's Power Plant Mall will be the special venue for a most exciting charity event: Rockwell goes retro for the La Mesa.

The event, to benefit the La Mesa Watershed Project, will relive the '60s and '70s. Be part of the celebration and show that saving the environment is everyone's business, whatever occupation or generation they belong to.

A series of concerts features popular baby boomers. There will be a dinner concert tonight at the ground level of the rear lobby titled "Broadway in the '60s." It will feature Jamie Rivera, Isay Alvarez, Robert Sena, Raymond Lauchengco, Pinky Amador, Leo Valdez and many more, with Toti Fuentes on the baby grand.

"Retro @ Rockwell," the big shindig at the Rockwell Covered Courts, will happen tomorrow. Groove to the music of Ramon Jacinto, Spirit of '67 and other stars.

Tickets are available at Bantay Kalikasan, ABS-CBN Foundation building, Mother Ignacia, QC; Rockwell's Dish; Page One; Bantay Kalikasan Booth, G/F Power Plant and in all Gourmet Café branches. Call 411-2227.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DAY OF GERMAN UNITY

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Assistant Editor
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MESSAGE

ON THIS auspicious occasion, I wish to invite our Filipino friends and the German community in the Philippines to this year's celebration of the Day of German Unity.

Twelve years ago, the Berlin Wall came down and the Brandenburg Gate swung wide open, bringing unity and freedom to all Germans. Since then, political, social and economic developments have gained momentum and culminated in our Parliament's and Government's transfer from Bonn back to Berlin, our new, old capital. With this development, Berlin was moved from the edge of the Iron Curtain back into the middle of Europe. Germany has constructively participated in creating and strengthening the European Union. With the aim to build a just and peaceful order in the whole of Europe. Germany is now actively striving for an enlargement enabling Central and East European countries to join the European Union.

Germany has assumed greater responsibility not only in Europe but in the rest of the world as well. My country continues to pursue an active policy on Asia, particularly the Asean states, with which we enjoy economic and political cooperation of more than twenty years. Germany constantly endeavors towards a strong, open and reliable partnership with her Asian partners and continues to place utmost importance on cooperation founded on the spirit of trust and mutual understanding. The EU-Asean and the ASEM, for instance, are fora that provide Germany and the Philippines the opportunity to exchange views on a broad range of international issues.

Bilaterally, Germany remains committed to a longstanding partnership in economic cooperation and development with the Philippines. Since its inception in 1963, our partnership in development has been on firm ground with a large number of individual experts, NGO workers and government institutions lending invaluable support for almost four decades.

Furthermore, I am confident that together with the new administration and the Philippine private business sector, both countries will be able to intensify their already well-established economic and commercial ties.

A trading value amounting to almost US$2.2 billion in 2000 and the presence of over 140 German companies actively operating in the Philippines attest to Germany's role as one of the Philippines' most important economic partners outside the Pacific rim. Among these companies count some of the country's biggest foreign investors such as internationally well-known names as Siemens, Deutsche Telekom, BMW and Frankfurt Airport, carrying with them a longstanding commitment to the Philippines.

The holding of the first ever Philippine-German Economic Council meeting in April of this year was yet another move towards further strengthening bilateral economic relations that will likewise involve small and medium-sized companies.

It is our aim to further strengthen our bilateral political dialogue, improve our economic and social ties, and contribute to the prosperous development of the Republic of the Philippines based on common values, social justice and democracy. In sharing these values we gain strength to defend them whenever they are threatened. The Filipino and German people alike have shown their solidarity and unreserved support to the United States of America after the horrifying attacks perpetrated by fundamentalist terrorists. It is gratifying to see that we are united in the struggle to ensure the future of the free world.

My first months as Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Philippines have been a source of many meaningful and enriching experiences. I wish to extend my highest appreciation to the Filipino people, to the Philippine government, and most especially to Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for the friendly support and guidance during my first months in Manila.

In conclusion, I again express my sincere hope that the partnership between our two countries will continue to deepen and that we will derive a great deal of mutual benefit from our relationship in the years to come.

HERBERT D. JESS
German Ambassador to the Philippines

AGAINST TERROR

Standing with America

Message delivered by His Excellency Johannes Rau, president of the Federal Republic of Germany, on Sept. 14, 2001 at the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin

NO ONE knows better than the people of Berlin what America has done for freedom and democracy in Germany. We would not be able to stand here at the Brandenburg Gate this evening had America not supported us over many years and in difficult times.

Thus today from Berlin we say to all Americans:

America does not stand alone. The whole world stands at this time at the side of the great American nation. The German people stands at the side of the American people. We are bound by friendship, we are bound by the same values, we are bound by our love of freedom.

Here in Berlin, we remember American aid after the war, the defense of the freedom of Berlin and American's great contribution to Germany unity. I particularly welcome all Americans who live with us in Berlin and all over Germany or who are visiting. In these difficult days their thoughts are at home.

As Germans, our thoughts and our feelings also go out to America. We all still have the dreadful pictures in our heads. We cannot get them out of our minds. We have all become witnesses to murderous acts of violence such as the world has never before experienced outside times of war. We think of the mothers and fathers who have lost their children. We think of the children who will never see their parents again. We think of all those who have lost friends and colleagues. We think of the immeasurable suffering that hatred and terror has brought to many thousands of families all across the country.

The murderers' targets were in New York and Washington. But all people all over the world have been stricken. The victims include people from Asia, from Australia and from Europe, from Africa and from America. The attack targeted the entire world community.

We stand united here in solidarity. We stand together against hatred and violence.

Particularly in Berlin, John F. Kennedy is unforgotten. In his first speech as American president, he described American's solidarity with us Europeans thus:

"To those old allies whose cultural and spiritual origins we share, we pledge the loyalty of faithful friends. United there is little we cannot do in a host of cooperative ventures. Divided there is little we can do—for we dare not meet a powerful challenge at odds and split asunder."

Today, I say as German Federal President and today we all say:

America, too, can rely upon this loyalty of a faithful friend.

Many people are afraid at this time. I understand that.

This fear must not cripple us. The rage which many feel, the powerlessness which is so difficult to bear, must not make us descent into panic.

The murderers and those who incited them are difficult to find and yet more difficult to combat. But no matter who they are, they are murderers, nothing else—and therefore they must be punished. They do not stand for a people, they do not stand for a religion, they do not stand for a culture. Fanaticism destroys every culture. Fundamentalism does not bear witness to faith, rather is its archenemy.

We will not and must not allow ourselves to be led by anyone into condemning entire peoples or entire cultures as guilty. But those who sink to associate with the murderers—for whatever reason—those who offer them protection and assistance make themselves as culpable as the murderers.

We will not react to the challenge with powerlessness or with weakness, rather with strength and determination. And with circumspection. Hatred must not lead us into hatred. Hatred blinds. Nothing is so difficult to build and nothing so easy to destroy as peace.

We have to combat terrorism and we will defeat it.

We need great staying power to do so. Whoever wants to truly overcome terrorism must ensure through political action that the ground is cut from below the feet of the prophets of violence.

FEDERAL President Johannes Rau

Poverty and exploitation, misery and lack of rights drive people to despair. The disregard of religious feelings and cultural traditions robs people of hope and dignity.

This leads some to violence and terror. This sows hatred even in the hearts of children.

All people have the right to respect and dignity. Those who experience respect in their lives and love their lives will not want to throw it away. Those who live in dignity and confidence will hardly become a suicide attacker.

Determined action is the order of the day. Because we know and demonstrate that because we leave no doubt of it, we say the best protection against terror, violence and war is a just international order. Peace will be the fruit of justice.

That is a laborious process. It takes a long time and costs more than just time. But for us a more peaceful, secure world has to be worth it. For us and the children of our world.

We have seen apocalyptic pictures. They must rouse us so that peace can make new ground. Freedom needs the strong power of peace and freedom is part of peace.

We have all reason to be vigilant, but no reason to panic. Above all else we need carefully considered action.

Our common goal is peace and security, justice and freedom for all people, no matter where they live.

John F. Kennedy remarked in his day, "Our goal is not the victory of might, but the vindication of right."

If we, the nations of the world, stand united, terror will not triumph.

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Close economic and trade relations

AS EUROPE'S largest market with over 82 million consumers, Germany is the third biggest economy in the world with a GDP of 3,900 billion DM (2000) and a per capita amount of 47,000 DM. In 2000 alone, German companies reached a total of 170 billion DM in overseas investments.

It is, therefore, not surprising that Germany is the most important economic partner for the Philippines outside the Pacific rim. Last year, both countries achieved a record trade volume of 5.8 billion DM. The Philippines exports electronics, chemical products, office equipment, garments and agricultural products to Germany. Germany, on the other hand, exports electronic primary products, machinery, cars, telecommunications equipment, optics and pharmaceutical products in the Philippines.

Having founded the German-Philippine Economic Council in April this year, we now have an instrument to foster cooperation between companies from both countries and to further implement projects. Both Germany and the Philippines are aware that there is enormous potential in a number of sectors such as infrastructure, information technology, and mechanical engineering. With the political will of the new administration to further market and structural reforms, and to emphasize stabilization and consolidation, the German industry is optimistic that this will lead to renewed inflow of German investments.

Well over 130 German companies are currently operating in the Philippines, including Deutsche Telekom, BMW, Deutsche Bank, Frankfurt Airport, Lufthansa and Siemens—to name a few—exemplifying long-term German commitment to the Philippines. Complementary to the big players, the German government actively promotes an increase in cooperation among small and medium-sized companies from both companies.

It is likewise hopeful that the new Philippine administration will give fresh impulses for integration among the Asean states. With the experience from the European Union showing that economic integration promotes prosperity for all participating countries, German companies are now looking forward to the formation of an Asean market in which goods and services move freely to the advantage of our host country, the Philippines.

Development cooperation: Commitment for 2-year period 2002-2003 negotiated fresh funding close to P2 billion

THE NEW bilateral financial and technical assistance deal was signed by Germany and the Philippines on Sept. 14, 2001. The negotiations took place in the traditional friendly atmosphere of mutual understanding. The two delegations assessed the performance of completed and ongoing projects, and discussed future development cooperation as well as strategic issues in priority areas of cooperation.

The new package of financial and technical assistance for the year 2002/2003 will amount to DM75.4 million. Around 95 percent of the financial assistance pledged by Germany, i.e. more than DM50 million, consists of soft loans at a concessional interest rate of .75 percent p.a. to be repaid by the Philippines over a 40-year period after a 10-year grace period without repayment. The remaining 5 percent of the total financial package consists of grant aids. As regards funding for technical assistance programs and projects, Germany will provide the Philippines with a new amount of DM22 million for the 2002/2003 commitment period.

Priority areas of future cooperation are:

- Environmental Policy, Protection and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources
- Economic Reform and Development of the Market System
- Drinking Water, Water Management, Sanitation/Waste Management
- Health, Nutrition and Family Planning, Aids/HIV

The reduction of poverty, both in urban and rural areas, will be the overarching goal of present and future development cooperation.

The German delegation also seized the opportunity to present the wide array of other forms of development cooperation to Neda. Aside from the three German scholarship awarding institutions, there are "Integrated Experts" from the Center for International Migration (CIM), the Senior Expert Service (SES), the German Development Service (DED) and vocational and professional training programs conducted by Carl Duisberg Gesellschaft (CDG).

In addition to that, Germany's annual contributions to multilateral development organizations, such as ADB, World Bank and UNDP and funding for German foundations, churches and NGOs operating in the Philippines, equal the amount of the bilaterally negotiated development assistance. The bulk of bilateral development assistance, however, is channeled through German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and Germany's development bank KfW. All in all, the total of German development assistance funds to the Philippines comes therefore close to DM80 million annually, almost P2 billion annualy.

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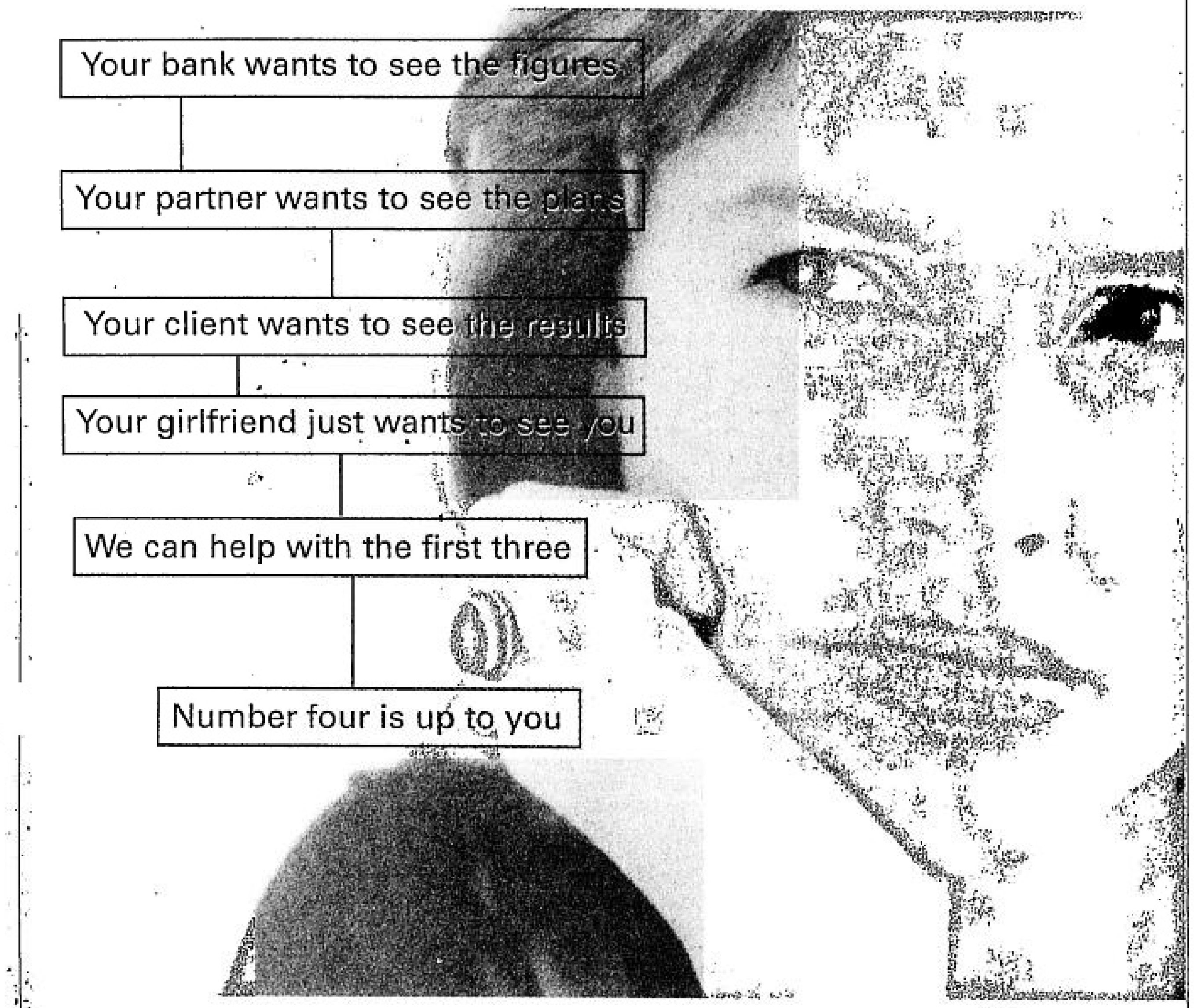
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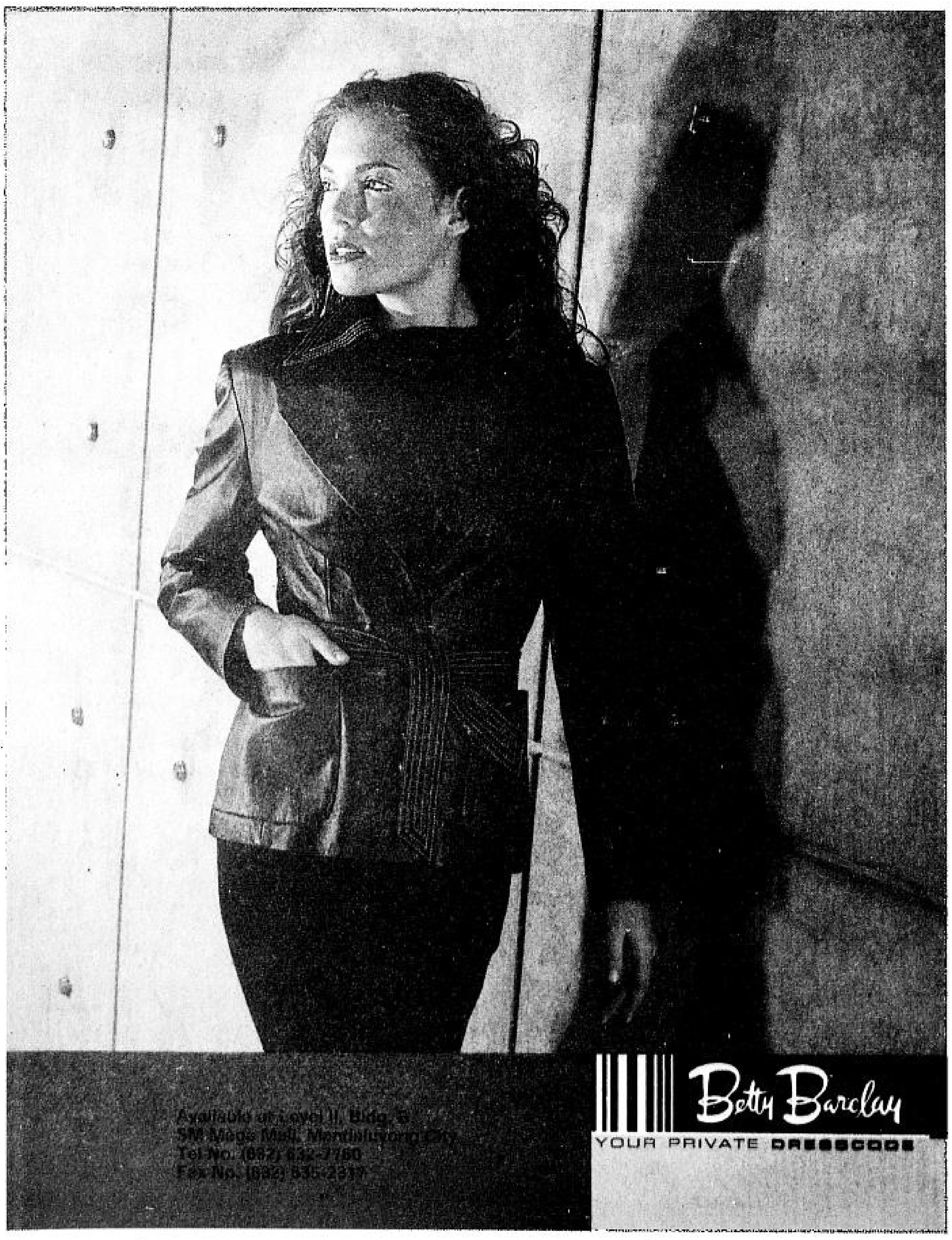

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Germany's trade with Asia-Pacific shoots up in 2000

IN A MOVE that has caught most observers by surprise, Asian economies have restructured their way to recovery sooner than generally expected, posted strong balance-of-payments numbers, seen capital markets bouncing back, trade getting on to the fast track and capital appreciation via export growth.

The cumulative effect on Germany's trade with the region has been a steep rise in the total volume of trade that saw a record turnover of DM 268 billion in 2000, reaffirming the renewed growth dynamics of a region that only three years ago saw an economic and financial crisis rip through its startled economies.

Turning to numbers, Germany's exports to the Asia-Pacific region in 2000 grew by 26 percent over 1999 to DM 105.5 billion, with the main trading partners in the region—Japan and the People's Republic of China—contributing to this change with increases of 27.3% and 36.3% respectively. Japan topped the region with a total volume of DM 78 billion, up 23.8% from the previous year.

By the same token, the development has pointed to the swift and strong recovery of the Asian economies and the emergence of a sustained market potential in the Asia-Pacific region that Germany's export businesses could exploit more profitably.

One of the most significant boosts to Germany exports in 2000 came from the Republic of Korea with a rise of 40%. Other notable increases in German exports were accounted for by Malaysia (38.6%), Singapore (31.8%), Thailand (29%) and Indonesia (20.6%).

Asean (Association of South East Asian Nations) as a whole represented a cheerful trade scenario as well, registering a turnover of DM 52 billion, up 32.2% from 1999. Germany exports were pegged at DM. 20.85 billion while imports touched DM 31.29 billion, reflecting a 28.5% and 34.8% increase respectively.

In keeping with its determined export drive, China distinguished itself in 2000 with a total trade volume of DM 54.3 billion vis-à-vis Germany, with an export component of DM 35.96 billion, up 34% while drawing German imports to the tune of DM 18.39 billion, reflecting a 35.3% rise over the previous year.

It is contended that the prospective entry of a weighty player like China into the World Trade Organization (WTO) would further expand market opportunities in both directions towards enhancement of trade in Sino-Germany economic relations.

The German import front also brought glad tidings in its wake for the Asian economies. German imports from the Asia-Pacific region rose last year by 28.2% to touch DM 162.3 billion, further aided by the relatively devalued currencies in certain countries of the region.

Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines were prominent in their share of German imports at DM 4.89 billion, 7.39 billion, 5.1 billion and 3.7 billion, up 27.5%, 47.7%, 24.6% and 37.6% respectively.

South Asia did not fail to keep up the strong trend in Germany trade prospects for 2000. An increase of 17.8% in trade volume at DM 13.82 billion characterized the region as a whole, with India registering a stellar performance with a total volume of DM 8.8 billion. Indian exports at DM 4.74 billion and imports at DM 4.08 billion completed the picture.

Bangladesh's strong export offensive vis-à-vis Germany was very much evident in its performance of DM 1.62 billion, up a whopping 53.7% over 1999. Understandably, imports from Germany were a modest DM 280.9 million.

Sri Lanka's nearly DM 900 million total trade volume gave an edge to German exports, increasing by 29.8% to DM 375 million while maintaining a small margin in its imports at DM 523 million (plus 8%)

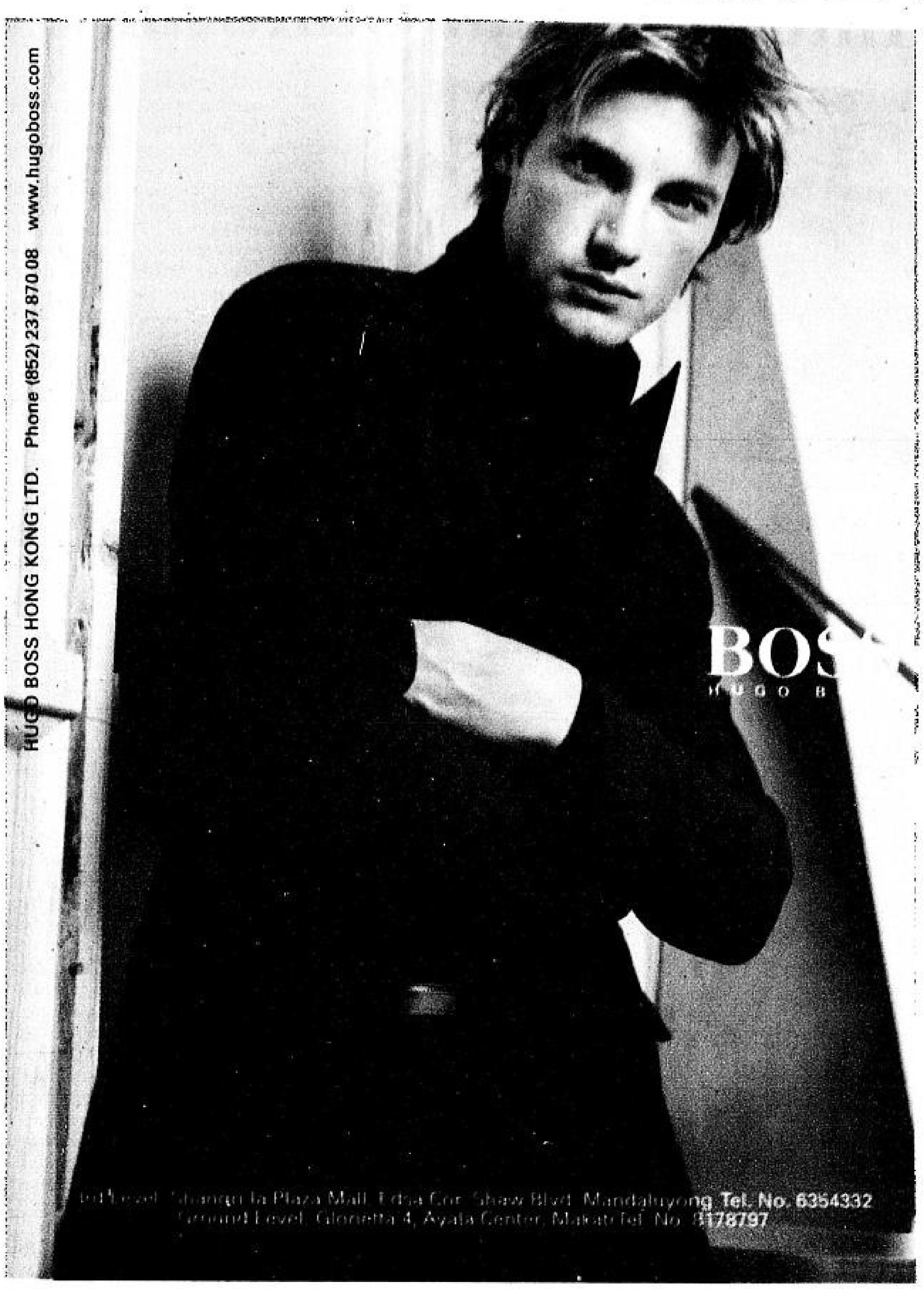
The aforesaid scenario bears testimony to the fact that German businesses have renewed their confidence in the potential of the Asia-Pacific region that points to proliferating export opportunities as well as investment avenues, given the vast openings in telecom, power and transport sectors in several of the countries in the region.

Germany's trade relations with the region have been accentuated by hi-tech content, with German capital goods industries playing a significant role.

Asia's longer-term prospects have been given a boost by the World Bank which has predicted a 5% annual growth rate for the next two decades—strong by existing world standards.

The momentum in trade revealed by the Asia-Pacific region in 2000 will be sustained in the current year as well and will turn Asia-Pacific into the leading growth region of the world again, according to analysts.

As the world grapples with the ongoing pressures of globalization at large, it seems a safe bet that the Asia-Pacific region will not only be well qualified to cope with them but also serve as a trendsetter for other economic players around the globe.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GTZ: three decades of fruitful cooperation for a better Filipino future

THE ENACTMENT of a health insurance system for the poor. Delivery of medical supplies and health programs in rural communities. Comprehensive reforestation approaches and forest protection programs. Supporting the dual training approach in vocational training systems. Instituting entrepreneurial programs to small and medium-scale industries. Providing for adequate water supply in remote *barangays*. Assistance to BIR for better taxation schemes and conveyance of services to rebuild public confidence, and support to Neda for appurtenant development and economic strategies—these are only some examples of GTZ's support to its Philippine partners on national and local levels. The overarching goal of all approaches is to help the Philippines, especially the underprivileged or economically challenged, to cope with the demands of today and be prepared for the challenges of tomorrow.

Already in its 30th year of significant operations worlwide, the German Agency for Technical Cooperation or GTZ is indispensably at the heart of the Philippine-German cooperation. First making its presence felt in the Philippines in 1971, GTZ continues to make its impact stronger and ever consistent with its mandate to "help improve the living standards and prospects for people in partner-countries, and conserve the natural resources base on which life depends."

The GTZ is organized as a private enterprise, but owned by the Federal Republic of Germany, which operates under a general agreement with the Federal Germany Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). It is tasked with the responsibility of initiating and conducting activities on technical cooperation on behalf of the German government. Technical cooperation is meant to boost the performance capacities of partner countries by harnessing, transferring, and mobilizing the skills and expertise of their people and organizations. It also entails creating the proper environment in which these moves will be undertaken. Simply speaking, it aims to strengthen people's initiatives, enabling them to improve their lives through their own efforts.

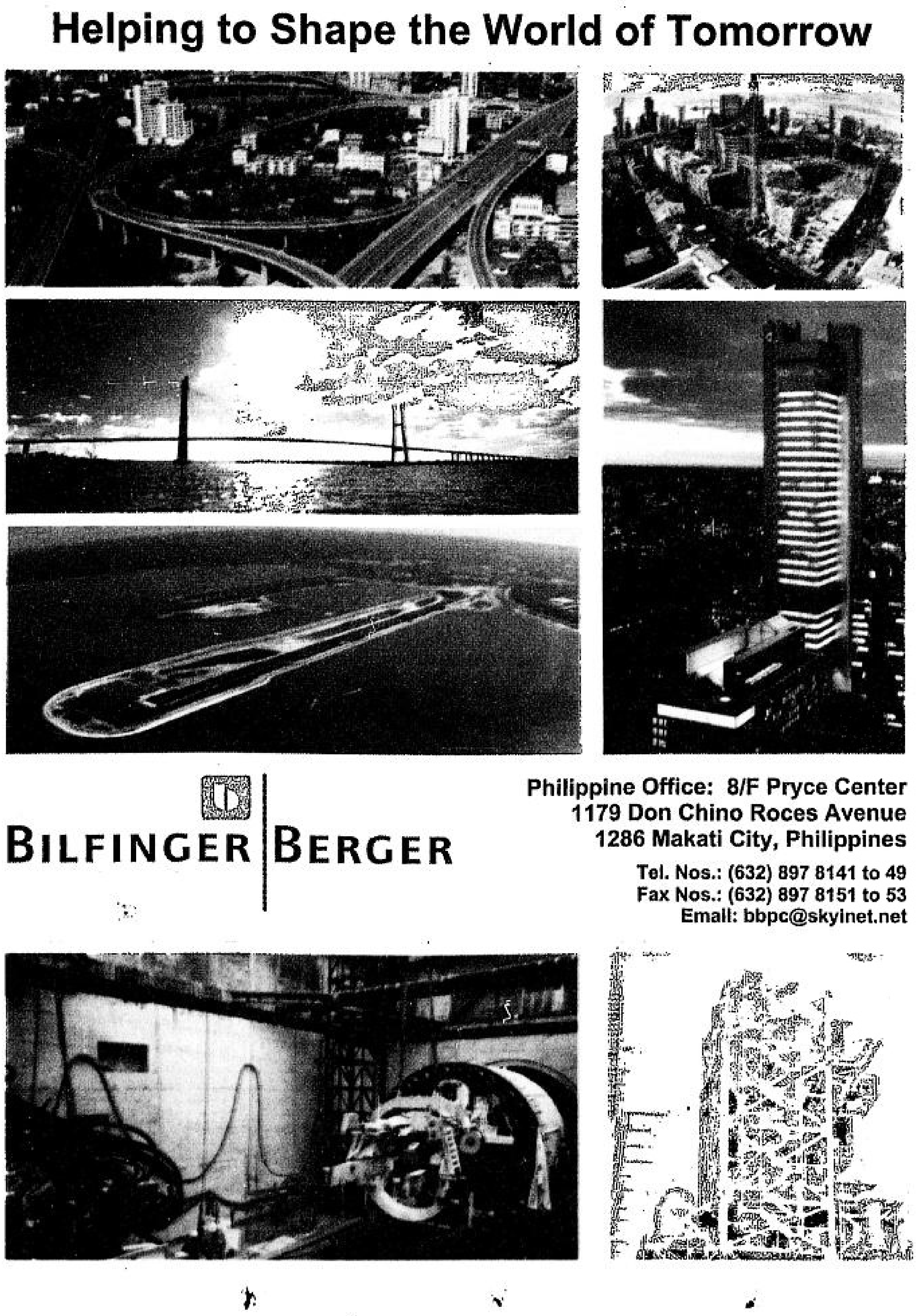
The GTZ also supports development and reform processes on behalf of other German ministries, partner-country governments and international organizations and institutions, such as the Asian Development Bank, World Bank and European Union, and it cooperates closely with the German Development Bank (KfW). GTZ's projects aim to benefit the public using allocated budgets of the German government or other donors for development-related purposes.

In Asia, in the Philippines particularly, GTZ has carved a reputation as a service organization to reckon with insofar as development cooperation is concerned. Whether it's for policy reforms or changes in management systems, it has come a long way in shaping the political, social and economic landscape of the Philippines.

True to its covenant, Germany has found a committed partner in the Philippines as it is in its priority-country list worldwide. Through the years, Germany's GTZ has continuously made a mark in improving the Filipinos' quality of lives in health, water, natural resources and economic reforms in both rural and urban communities. With its wide range of services in the areas of cooperation, various communities countrywide have benefited from health care programs, water supply, technical education, finance facilities, coastal resources management and environmental protection. Wherever possible, GTZ initiates and supports public-private partnerships.

GTZ's overall support has always been anchored on mutual exchange for growth in the Philippines. Alleviation of poverty is one primary concern, and this is the reason for GTZ to encourage the government to redirect its spending on critical programs needing urgent attention. The fusion of GTZ's unwavering support and the Philippine government's integral work has created a significant synergy in realizing the partnership's goal. With the Philippines at the threshold of critical transformations, it has better positioned its dynamic function to respond to the needs of Filipinos.

Today, GTZ continues its fruitful engagement in the Philippines. It has expanded its headquarters in Makati to accommodate its growing activities. In its decentralization program, in the light of bringing more focus to its partner-country and strengthening ties with the Philippines. GTZ's regional director Martin Mueller has joined the team of experts along with Country Portfolio manager Peter Klingensteiner and its program managers, namely Dr. Claude Bodart for health, Dr. Bernd J. Kaltwasser for water, Dr. Lothar Diehl for green sector and Dr. Herwig Mayer for macroeconomic issues. There are additional 17 German and international experts and 120 Filipino specialists.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The Goethe Institut Inter Nationes: International Cultural Exchange with Germany

THE Goethe-Institut is a registered organization founded in 1951, with headquarters in Munich. It is active in teaching the German language and the promotion of cultural exchange, Worldwide it maintains 126 Institutes in 76 countries which organize cultural programs, provide the latest information about Germany and offer German language classes. The Goethe-Institutes in Germany teach German language and impart culture to students from all over the world.

Cultural globalization creates a great opportunity for a worldwide encounter of diverse cultures. However, the wealth of national and regional heritage is threatened by this exchange. International cultural policy means a commitment to cultural diversity and the interests of the host country are significant for the design of programs offered in the fields a.o. of architecture, art, music, ballet, theatre film or environmental concerns. The German contribution to this international dissemination of culture is based on a significant European tradition and sustained by unique historical experiences. For the last 40 years, since 1961, the Goethe-Institut has been doing active work among the Filipino people in all cultural fields. Worldwide, 2001 is also the year that Goethe-Instituts celebrate 50 years of meaningful activities that contribute to world peace and unity.

Some points on the role of:

- The Goethe-Institut Inter Nationes reaches out directly to the local cultural and educational elite and students as future elite, and offers the missing link to Germany.
- The Goethe-Institut Inter Nationes has been proven effective in the worldwide cultural distribution and competition.
- The Goethe-Institut Inter Nationes makes a valuable contribution to democracy and peace by means of intercultural dialogue,
- Language is the gateway to one's culture. Germany works with partners for a multi-lingual future in Europe and the world. Hence, the The Goethe-Institut Inter Nationes also sees itself as an European Cultural Center.

In 40 years of fruitful work in the Philippines, the Goethe-Institut German Cultural Center Manila has proven to be one of the pillars of Philippine-German cultural relations. The vital tasks of the institute are emphasized in the full title: Goethe-Institut Inter Nationes, for the promotion of the German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, the namesake of the non-profit organization, the Institut renders a contribution to the cultural dialogue and better understanding between all people.

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The academe goes international

GERMANY'S higher education institutions have much to offer students from all over the world. A comprehensive range of subjects, high academic standards and a great variety and diversity of institutional profiles ensure that students from other countries will find study opportunities to match their personal requirements and interests.

More than 180,000 international students are currently to be found among the 1.9 million students enrolled at more than 300 institutions of higher education in Germany. A number of new undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate degree programs instructed in English and with an international profile offer especially favorable conditions to students from abroad.

International courses in Germany

In an age of ever greater and closer international cooperation in business and trade, politics and science itself, German universities have taken up the challenge to actively promote the process of internationalization in the realm of academia. Therefore, highly qualified students from all over the world are particularly welcomed by Germany's higher education institutions. In an effort to offer more attractive conditions to international students, more than 70 new international degree programs have been developed over the past two years, mostly in the fields of natural science, engineering, computer science and mathematics, environmental science, economics, German language and culture and European studies. They combine the traditional qualities of the German higher education system with elements which make it easier for international students to reach their educational goals:

- courses and lectures held in English (at least at the outset)
- tightly organized study programs
- international degrees (Bachelor's, Master's, doctoral degree)
- German language courses
- special services: academic support services provided by tutors and mentors, intensive study counseling, work in small groups; help with initial orientation.
- opportunities for integrated study periods at partner universities and colleges abroad

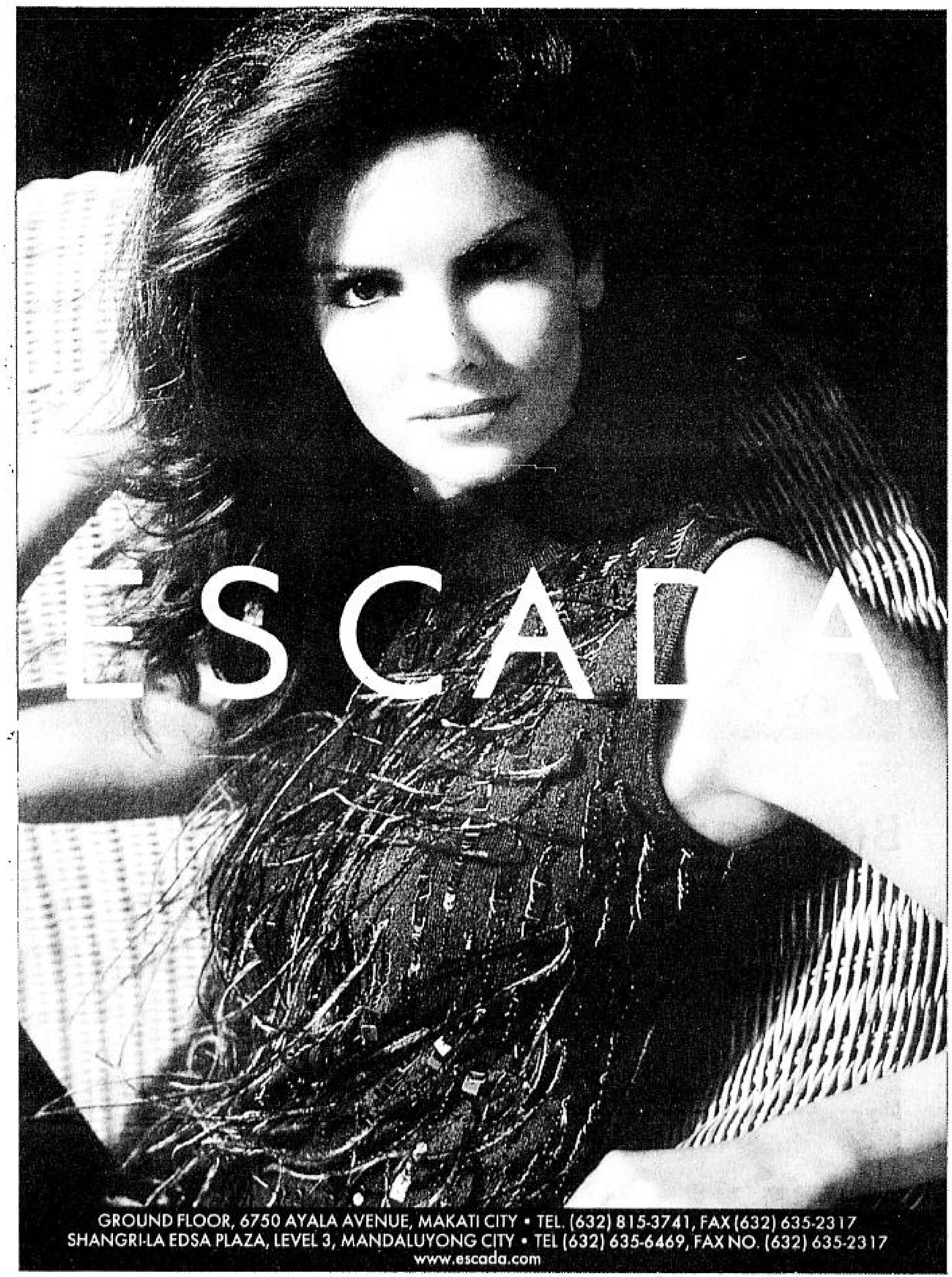
Assured quality

In order to qualify for funding, these new degree courses, which are also open to Germans, underwent a rigorous selection procedure under the auspices of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK). Programs receive financial support from the German Ministry of Education and the Foreign Affairs Ministry, while the DAAD contributes its expertise as one of Europe's leading institutions in higher education cooperation, by advising and supporting the international courses.

Applying for an international degree course

The DAAD brochure provides a contact address for each course. You should write to the contact persons and request further details and information on the courses which are of interest to you. You will then receive an initial information package which will help you in your decision making. Most courses begin in October. In some cases, preparatory German language courses will start between July and September. Some programs allow you to choose between October and April as starting dates. Admissions deadlines vary as do academic requirements. For undergraduate programs, generally a higher education entrance qualification equivalent to the German qualification is required. To be admitted to a graduate program, you will require a Bachelor's degree, sometimes with a relevant study orientation. International students whose native language is not English are usually asked to take a TOEFL test. Foreign students wishing to study in Germany will also need a student visa before entering the country; German embassies and consulates in your home country will give you all the relevant information and will help you file your visa application.

For further information, please contact the German Embassy or directly the DAAD, Kennedyallee 50, P.O. Box 200404, D-53134 Bonn, Germany; tel no: (49) 228-8820, fax: (49) 228-882-444, Internet: www.daad.de.



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Eurocampus, the European school of the future

THE only one of its kind in the world at its inauguration in 1992, Eurocampus is perfectly designed for a harmonius blending of different European school programs. Cooperative efforts between its different component schools have given excellent results in academic and non-academic sectors as well. The Eurocampus model has since then replicated in Asia and elsewhere: in Taipei, Shanghai,, Bombay, Sydney and Toronto.

Several schools (and nationalities) converge and work together at Eurocampus: the French and the German schools, which are its founding components, were joined by a Dutch, then by a part of British school in Manila. The Swiss community in the Philippines has also participated in the development of Eurocampus through financial contributions to the project.

Besides the wide variety of nationalities of its students and professors (more than 15 nationalities in the year 2000), a distinct Eurocampus feature is the desire to create a harmonious whole wherein different schools may follow their respective national pedagogical programs while sharing with the others the infrastructure, a part of the personnel, extracurricular activities, and also quite often, their respective scholastic activities.

At the Eurocampus, students receive a Europe oriented education in an Asia environment. They learn to compromise, accept and respect each other—important qualities for the young generation.

The German school

Founded in 1982 as Jose Rizal School, the German School of Manila (Deutsche Schule Manila or DSM) is fully recognized German School abroad. It is supported by the German State through financial contributions as well as the delegation of some teaching staff. Together with the French School (Ecole Francaise de Manille or EFM), the school has been recognized by the Philippine government through the Department of Education, Culture and Sports since 1980.

Kindergarten, primary and secondary levels up to Grade 10 are taught by fully qualified teachers. The curriculum is as stipulated for German schools and is closely monitored and approved by the German Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs. The final exams after Grade 10 are the same as in Germany.

English and French as foreign languages are compulsory from Grade 2 and 7 respectively, though as a result of the close cooperation with the French School and the presence of German Swiss pupils, French is optional starting Grade 5. Furthermore, the study of Tagalog is compulsory in Grade 3 and is also offered as extra activity up to Grade 7. German as a foreign langunge is offered to students as needed.

Music, arts, computer science, crafts and sports are all part of the curriculum though also offered as extra-curricular activities.

Philippines lures tourists with 'Pure Nature': World Tourism Fair in Berlin

BERLIN—THE Philippines vied with other countries in the Asian region to present its own brand of touristic products creatively at the annual International Tourism Exchange 2001, an annual event that has now come to signify a mirror to the panorama of tourist destinations globally, differentiated by the respective cultures, scenic landscapes, languages, tourism products and services, and the much-sought-after "unique selling points" of the countries in question.

The ITB is the best known international event of the tourism industry that draws travel professionals and policymakers from around the globe in an exercise that effectively dangles scores of old, new and improvised travel products, alluring holiday destinations and competing services before thousands of potential travellers seeking an escape from their mundane lives, shaping and testing new marketing strategies in the process as well.

In the event, the colorful and visually striking Philippine pavilion nestling in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Village—a cluster of tourism promotion campaigns by the member countries of the Asean—fielded 18 Philippine tour operators, hoteliers and resort-owners, the national airline and other travel service providers as well as the national Tourist Board in showcasing the country's promotional schemes under the inviting banner of "Pure Nature".

The launch of "Pure Nature" took off where "rediscovery" of the previous year had worked itself out, with all programs around it structured to enhance 'anchor' destinations with adequate infrastructure. Rediscovery was designed top foster a "pride of place" in the heart of every Filipino, encourage overseas residents to visit their homeland and discover their roots. It focused on the promotion of culture, history and the environment in the pursuit of the main objective of attracting more domestic and foreign visitors.

"Pure Nature" hardly needed much elaboration for the potential tourist. Mother Nature took care of most of the details, as it were. They included azure beaches and bays for bathing, diving and surfing, mountains and inactive volcanoes for climbing, hiking and trekking tours, cave explorations and golfing under palm trees. Sounds attractive?

Well, for tourists with a different bent of mind there were museums and heritage tours, pilgrimage and shrine tours, music and food festivals—all calculated to reflect the cultural richness of the Philippines.

ITB 2001 gave evidence that the recent Asian financial crisis was now part of history in as far its impact on tourism was concerned. At any rate, the Philippines got off lightly from its effects, keeping its tourism scenario intact, relatively speaking.

But disaster struck elsewhere. In 2000, even as the country was seeking to rebuild its national airline and get tourism back on the road, the attack by separatist guerillas and kidnapping of several European tourists virtually killed off all the growth and sent visitor arrivals into another tailspin, especially from Europe. The aforesaid factor explains why visitor arrivals began falling almost immediately after rising steadily all through January-March 2000.

However, the Philippine Department of Tourism reportedly went into high gear to mitigate the negative image that the Philippines suddenly got in its international markets. Against this background, the tourism figures for 2000 were released only for the six months of 2000 (January-June) at the ITB event. With total visitor arrivals at 1,063,256, it reflected a slight decline of 1.42 percent as against 1,078,547 registered for the same period in 1999.

German tourists, that endearing lot from Europe, suffered from the shock of the hostage crisis and went into the Philippines only to the extent of 29,923 arrivals (January-June 2000), down by nearly 8 percent over that of the corresponding period in 1999. Even under he changed circumstances, the German tourists were the largest contributors to the European arrivals in the Philippines.

The rather depressed results for 2000 have naturally made Philippine tourism officials redouble their efforts. A high-ranking delegation led by Tourism Minister Richard Gordon was present at ITB 2001 to reassure tour operators and the travel trade that the Philippines was now rapidly on its way to full recovery in the tourism sector.

"Germany is our best market in Europe and the eco-friendly interests and discriminating tourism shown by the Germans have set them apart in the Philippine tourism profile," stated Marie Venus Tan, director of the Philippine Department of Tourism office in Frankfurt, who added that the Germans stayed an average of 13.64 nights in the Philippines, which was 4 nights longer that the general average of 9.48 nights among all foreign visitors. The German tourists also constituted the highest number of 'repeat' visitors, it was understood.

While total tourist figures for 2000 are yet to be released by the Philippine Department of Tourism, it is unofficially projected that total visitor arrivals would be down by 18/20 percent over 1999.

With tourism contributing in no small measure to the foreign exchange earnings of developing countries and stabilization of the employment situation, the Philippines has also been a beneficiary of tourism development, netting in US$265.8 million for the period January-June 2000.

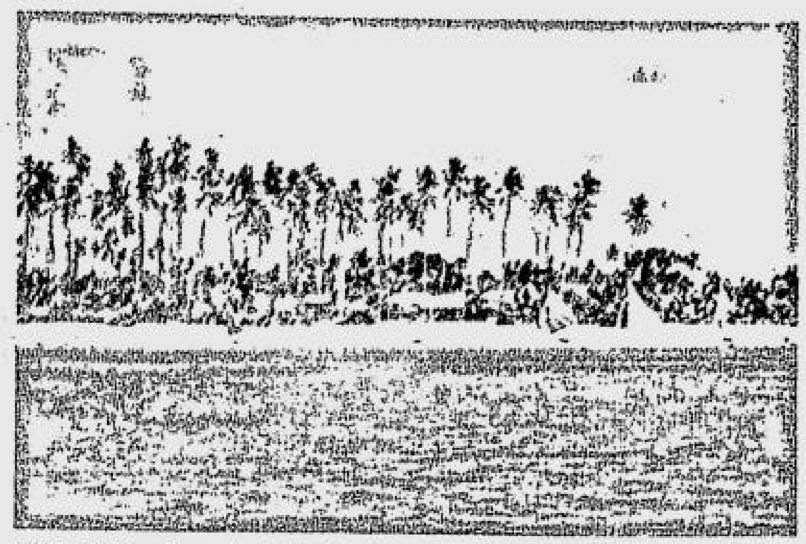
According to the Brussels-based World Travel and Tourism Council, the international tourism industry is already generating more than 10 percent of world economic output, directly or indirectly, creating jobs on a scale unrivalled by almost any other branch of industry, and attracting high levels of investment too.

The World Tourism Organization has estimated that there were 698 million international tourist arrivals in 2000, reflecting a 7 percent growth over 1999, the highest in the last decade and nearly twice that of 1999.

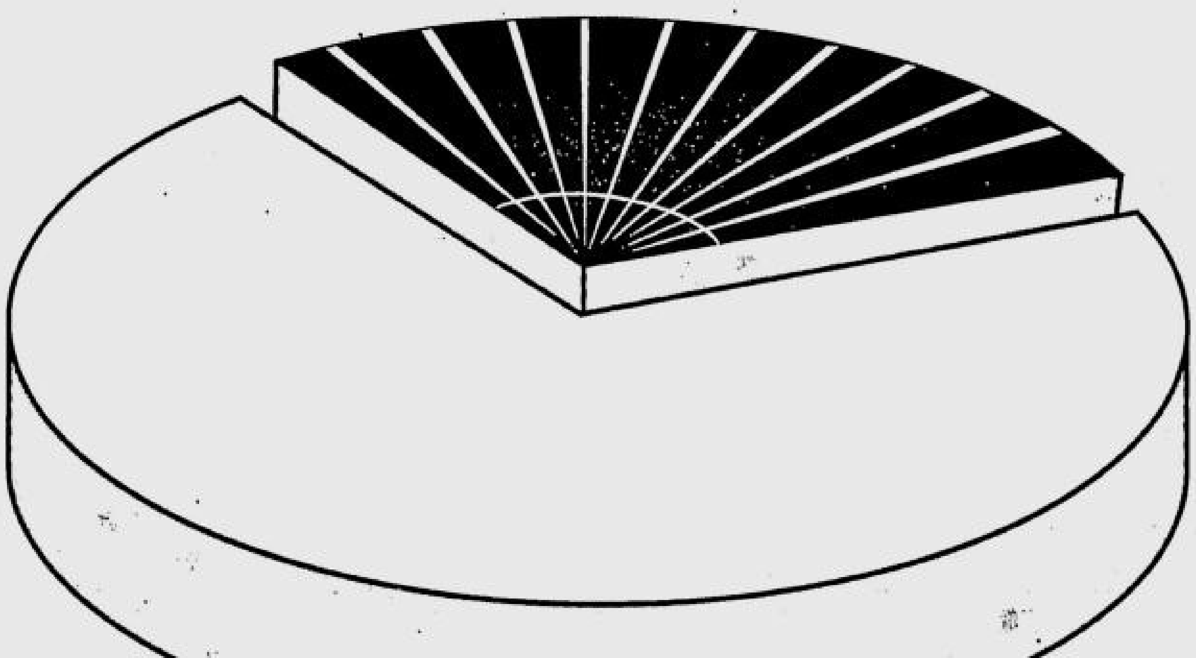
By the same token, the tourism industry fetched total receipts of US$476 billion in foreign exchange. To its credit, the Asia-Pacific region recorded the highest growth rate on 14.5 percent in tourism for 2000.

Berlin's ITB sees its role here as a catalyst in the growth of global tourism and a booster to the burgeoning tourist flows across countries and continents witnessed in recent years.

ITB 2001 saw some 9,000 exhibitors from nearly 180 countries and territories turn Berlin into a miniature world of tourist destinations for the globetrotter of tomorrow.



THE Philippines is dotted with numerous beaches perfect for swimming, diving or surfing.



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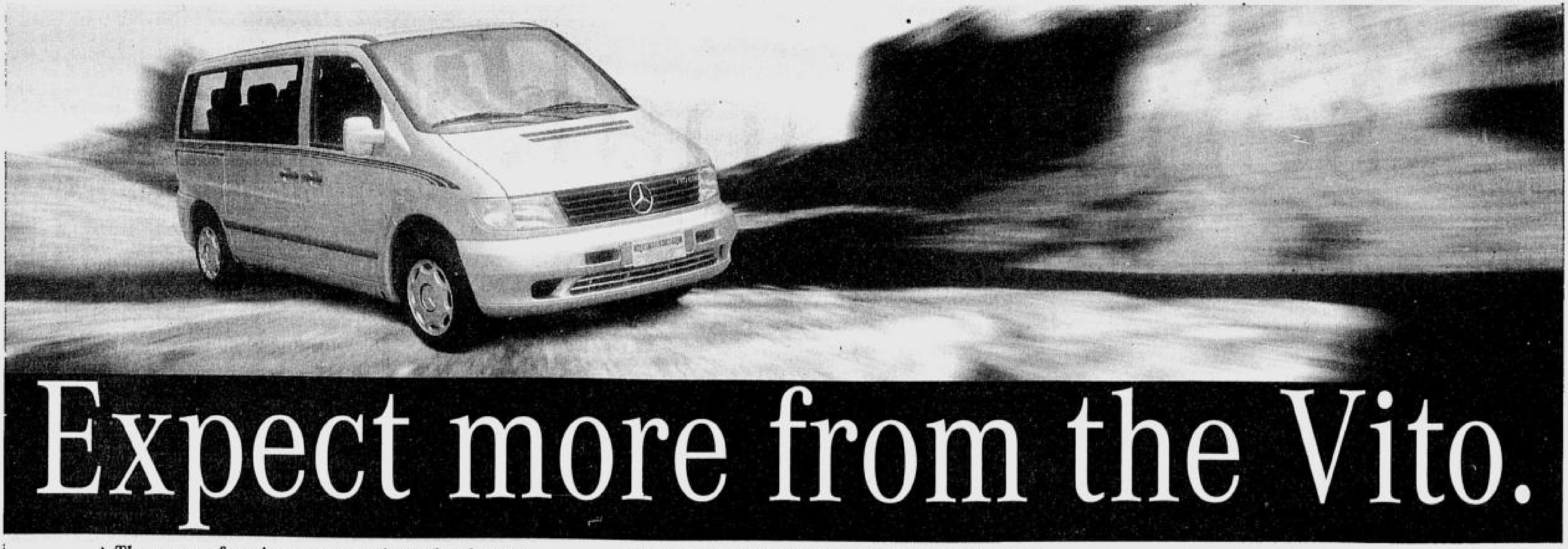

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Bringing the green back to Negros

BY CHARLES E. BUBAN

IT'S really hard to imagine this island was once covered with forest. All I can see now as we drive from Bacolod City are endless sugarcane plantations that seem to stretch beyond the horizon. As we drive east through the mountain route going to the municipality of Calatrava, we are greeted by a different landscape dominated by grasses and small shrubs. What grabs my attention, however, are these towering charred tree stumps that rise like tombstones by the mountainside.

They stand there as grim reminders of a past when people used to log and practice incessant "slash and burn". The result: the island's primary forest area is now down to 3 percent. And it does not end there. Since everything is connected, this practice brought a ripple of destruction to other resources of the island. Good coral structures are also down 5 percent while 80 percent of the wildlife species are threatened to oblivion. It all happened in a span of five centuries and through a population boom that now stands at three million.

What is now left of the forest is confined in the small area surrounding Mt. Kanla-on and its neighboring Northern Negros mountain range.

AT MUAD-Negros' Upland Technology Center in Calatrava, the 15-hectare property is filled with young trees that would one day bring this area back its forest. Photo by CHARLES E. BUBAN

It took a tragedy before the people of Negros realized they had to do something about the situation. When the sugar industry started to collapse in the early '80s, thousands of plantation workers were displaced from what was their only known means of livelihood. Unemployment rose tremendously. This forced sugarcane workers to become farmers, and they converted areas covered with forest to farm fields. Some became loggers or worked for logging companies. Then, in 1986, typhoon Nitang struck and left hundreds of people dead. Flashfloods damaged properties.

The disaster was an eye-opener. With the forest cover almost gone and the sugar industry barely moving, what else could the people of Negros do to reverse the plight of their beloved island? In 1987, non-government, government and private organizations convened to discuss their situation and formulate socio-economic projects.

It was also during this time when the Federation of Multi Sectoral Alliance for Development-Negros was born.

Reynic Alo, MUAD-Negros executive director, is now showing me around its most ambitious project—the North Negros Upland Development Program.

MUAD-Negros has allied with several organizations based in the island in order to consummate a project that entails the participation of the entire Negros population with the end of uplifting their lives and in the process convince them to reforest the mountains. In Calatrava, Reynic plans to lead me to the 15-hectare Upland Technology Center where a reforestation effort and experimental garden plots and mini-farm are maintained as part of the project.

Reforesting the mountains

For MUAD-Negros, the main challenge for the project is convincing the farmers to go into commercial and sustainable forestry. "For several times in the past, similar reforestation programs in the island had failed. One reason is the length of time involved. It will take a minimum of five years before our farmers can take profit from these trees and up to 25 years for them to harvest hardwoods for lumber. The wait discourages them since they always think of how they will feed their families right now," explains Alo.

Alo clarifies that the intention of the project is not to create tree farms or plantations, but permanent forest cover consisting of various native tree species, which can be commercially utilized after a relatively short period of time. The intended forest will be a mix of fast-growing fuel trees and slower-growing hardwood. The fuel woods will create revenues after five to six years, which will be sufficient to generate significant income for farmers.

In many ways the prime mover of this mission is the German Development Service *(see separate story)* which has been helping in the project for two years now. The DED is the development service of Federal Republic of Germany for personnel cooperation and among its many tasks is to provide specialists who will assist in the projects of its partners. "We saw MUAD-Negros' vision and that's why we are here to be their partner and be a linkage to other organizations and of course, funding agencies," says Martin Pfeilschmidt, a DED forestry consultant.

To fully realize the project, MUAD-Negros joined with DED and organizations like the Julio & Florentina Ledesma Foundation, Inc. and Gynesis. JF Ledesma Foundation, Inc. "Our task is to provide community organizational support as we prepare the upland communities through projects that advocate decision-making and proper management," explains Billy Tusalem, COO and executive director at JFLFI.

The JFLI will also integrate other factors including teaching primary health care. "By teaching them, this creates a responsible family unit which is very essential to the project. There are many things involved here and we are trying to address each of them. Look at it this way: We are like individual musicians of a symphony coming up with a great concerto," Tusalem reasons out.

Maria Rosa Solis of GYNESIS says that her group is involved in the management of a watershed area in Baticulan at the back of San Carlos City. GYNESIS helps in reforesting several properties and at the same time teaches the community how to farm properly. "With regard to coastal management, we help them raise seeweeds, abalone, and *talaba* to help communities generate income. This draws them away from destructive fishing and over fishing," says Solis.

When MUAD-Negros, JFLFI, GYNESIS and DED developed the Sustainable Commercial Forestry Program (SCFP) for the San Carlos Corridor, cash crops production was included to provide upland farmers with income in two- to four-month cycles while waiting for the harvesting period of trees in five years time. But the proponents also recognized problems in cash crop production as the previous experience showed that low productivity, lack of capital and absence of marketing support hounded farmers. Again, a package of support services becomes necessary. These support services include technology, training and technical assistance, credit and marketing. MUAD-Negros has all of this neatly wrapped up in Calatrava.

By establishing an Upland Technology Center, MUAD-Negros can experiment and test what crop is suitable to plant and what crop generates more income. "In this center, we will give high priority to high-value crops such as vegetables, spices, short gestating plants like banana, citrus and the like together with livestock and poultry. These crops, however, will be used to augment income our farmers get from planting rice or corn," explains Alo.

Every technology tested and verified in the upland center will be transferred to MUAD-Negros beneficiaries, who will then be trained and given technical assistance on how to apply the technology. The training shall be done in a classroom environment and in the actual field for application. Experts from other institutions shall also be tapped to assist the program technicians in the extension work with farmers, particularly on new technologies being introduced in the program.

Medardo Banogbanog is one of the recipients of the project: While he waits for his mahoganies to grow, he plants sugarcane, corn and banana in his 3-hectare field. To augment his yield for these crops he also maintains several plots of high-yielding crops where he earns a thousand a month.

We visit a nearby barangay where another MUAD-Negros recipient, Gilberto Mediano, maintains plots of high-yielding crops that help him earn extra to compensate for the income he gets from his small rice field. "As you can see we encourage them to keep up with their traditional crops of rice and corn as we teach them to plant other crops just to increase their productivity," Alo says.

But even with the high yield, another challenge is how to market these products. Incorporated with NNUDP is a marketing component. The basic idea of the marketing assistance is to eliminate the influence of traders and middlemen and connect producers and retailers directly.

MUAD-Negros does not buy the produce from the farmers, but take it only in commission charging a 10 percent marketing fee. This way both parties, farmers and MUAD, gain from marketing profits.

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Bringing the green . . . (From page E6)

Usually the farmers need cash immediately and the marketing process can take some time. That's why a quedan system is installed to provide them with a payment on account.

Another component of NNUDP is the credit program is a modified Grameen Banking approach. Modification was necessary to adapt it to living conditions and social structures of upland dwellers in Negros. In addition to the original Grameen Banking concept the program has included into the credit scheme a capital build-up life-/accident insurance. "The purpose of this additional component is not only loan security but at the same time create individual savings. The credit component of the program was named 'Project Dagyaw'. Dagyaw is the Ilonggo term for Bayanihan, a Filipino value meaning members of a group/community helping each other in farm activities, building houses etc.," explains Pfeilschmidt.

Honey: an alternative livelihood

Beekeeping is another project supported by MUAD-Negros to which DED has provided technical expertise and initial funding. While bee keeping has thrived in other parts of the Visayas, it is one business not fully explored in Negros. It's huge potential will definitely strengthen livelihood. "Beekeeping will certainly keep these farmers from pursuing other means of livelihood considered destructive to the environment such as charcoal burning, tree cutting and especially honey hunting that reduced the number of bee colonies in the remaining forests of the island," informs Horst Wendorf, a DED consultant for ecology and beekeeping.

The slopes of Mt. Kanla-on and the protected national park around it is now one of the location of project. To make further study, an apiary was established in the Municipality of Talisay in order to test different approaches, techniques, materials and equipment for beekeeping. Nick Lizares who lent his backyard for the project provides the location for the apiary. As a former beekeeper, Lizares' backyard provides several plants that are considered attractive for the bees. "In fact, we are studying these plants on how many times the bees forage on them. We need information on what plant and what location since they are necessary for bees to have sufficient supply of nectar and pollen," Wendorf explains.

Flowering plants are the basis of the bees' nutrition which collect nectar and pollen as their food. The nectar is ripened by the bees and stored as food (carbohydrates). Pollen is the nutrition for the larvae, without sufficient larvae, the colony will never expand. Nectar and pollen supply goes side by side in the development of a bee colony which is a requirement in extracting honey.

"Beekeeping is not labor intensive," explains Wendorf. "However, it requires profound knowledge of bees—its behavior and its reproductive cycle. That is why we are here. In order to fully understand the bees and become a successful beekeeper, dedication and keen observation is needed. If calculated properly, income will come in within two to three years."

THE Biodiversity Conservation Center looks like any other office located at the center of Bacolod City. But those unassuming buildings and structures inside conceals what really this place is all about. As you enter, the uniqueness of the place starts to unravel: special enclosures occupy most of the place's 1.2-hectare lot that makes you think you're in a zoo. Buy it's not a zoo. Every species housed inside are under the captive breeding program of the center which is run by the Negros Forests and Ecological Foundation, Inc.

The most prominent occupant of BCC are the three most in peril of extinction in the Philippines: the Philippine Spotted Deer (cervus alfredi), the Tarictic Hornbill (penelopides panini), and the Visayan Warty Pig (sus cebifrons). The captive breeding is also supported by various international organizations including the DED.

"Aside from the three most endangered, the center houses about 15 different species, among them the Philippine Hawk Eagle (spizaetus philippensis), Leopard Cat (prionailurus bengalensis rabori), the Serpent Eagle (spilornis holospirnus), Sailfin Lizard (hydrosaurus pustulatus) and a total of more than 60 other captive individuals," informs Cristina Georgii, a DED consultant based at the center.

The reasons why they were there are quite simple. Because there were less forest and increasing number of hunters looking for them, their chances for survival gets slimmer by the day. Apart from hunting these animals also have to compete with people for food.

It is why organizations like NFEFI decided to set up this captive-breeding center at the heart of the city. "We want people to see what we are doing. They can visit us and we also teach them why we are here," says Georgii.

Since 1986, NFEFI has been in the forefront of similar endeavors: the ongoing 'Adopt A Hectare Project' for reforestation, the Bacolod City Watershed Rehabilitation Project in 1987, the 'Endemic Tree Species Conservation Project' in 1995 and the BCC in 1996. NFEFI chair Donato Poblador reports that the island still needs at least 200,000 hectares of forest and at present they were able to reforest a considerable area of the watershed. "It would seem a big accomplishment for NFEFI but looking at the overall picture, we still haven't made an impact. That's why we need to get the cooperation of everyone," adds Daboi Castor who is the manager of the watershed project.

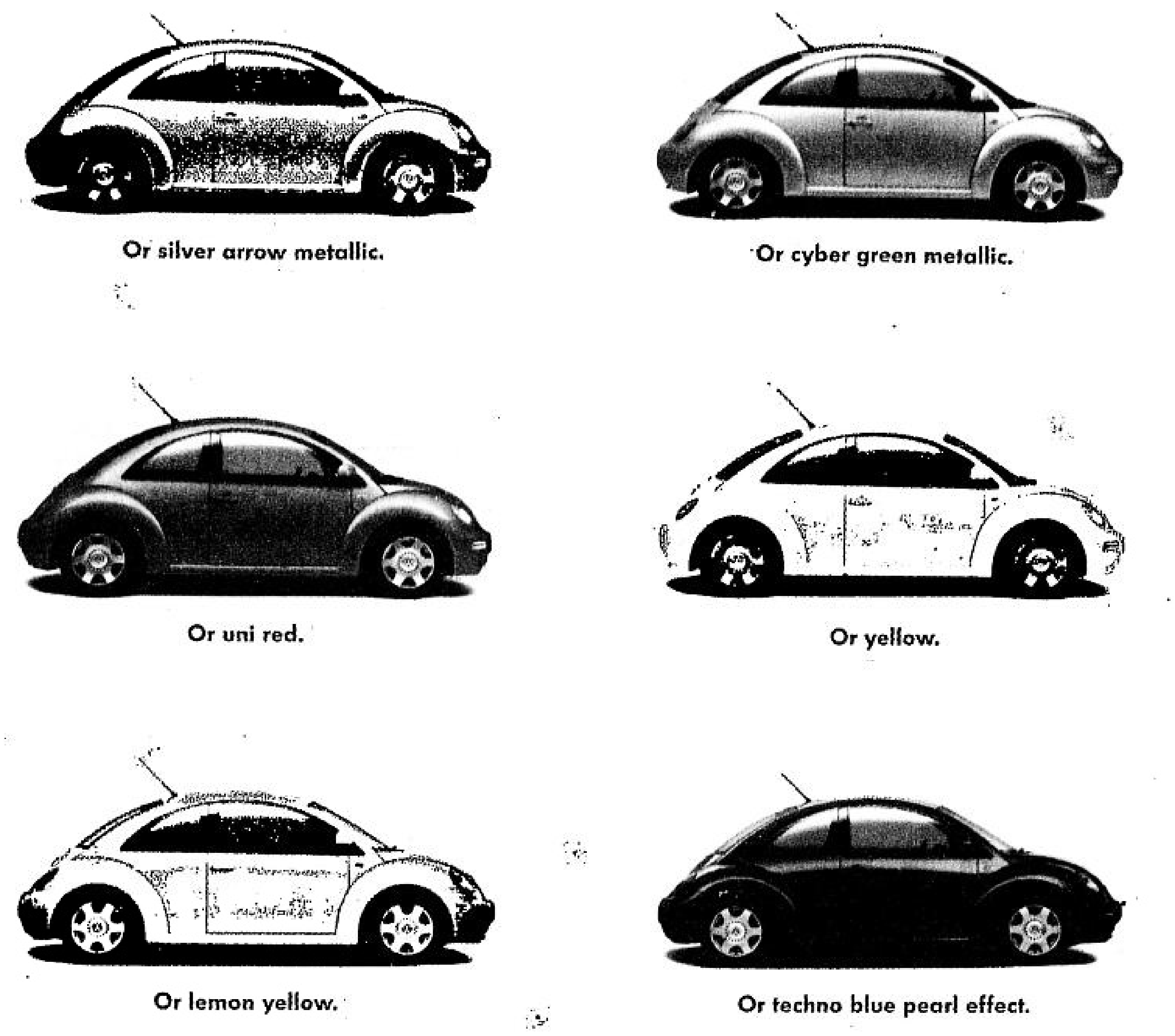
"Until we can build enough forest cover, the animals are always in danger of disappearing. Here at the NFEFI-BCC, we are looking for ways on how to increase their number while in captivity. So far we have been successful in some species. We work directly with two other breeding centers in Panay island and Dimaguete City in Negros Oriental wherein we share information and exchange animals (same species but opposite sex) to prevent breeding a particular species with his or her own lineage. That way we can breed strong lines," explains Lilibeth Cordova-la O', NFEFI executive director.

The center also coordinates with other breeding centers abroad where they also bring some of the animals to increase their chance for survival. "Imagine what will happen if a disease or an epidemic wipes out its entire population here in the center. We need to be sure these animals survive and won't follow the fate of other extinct animals," says Cordova-la O'.

"We also consider the way these animals behave in the wild, what food they eat, and all sorts of things. We can get information from forest dwellers or even hunters since they are more familiar with these animals," explains Dr. Emilia Lastica, the resident veterenatian.

Thanks to DED who facilitated the funding, BCC now has a spacious animal laboratory that can do blood chemistry, urine and fecal examination, and all other basic examinations which are needed in order to monitor the health of the animals in captivity. The center even has a small pharmacy to treat the animals during emergency cases.

Worth its weight in gold.



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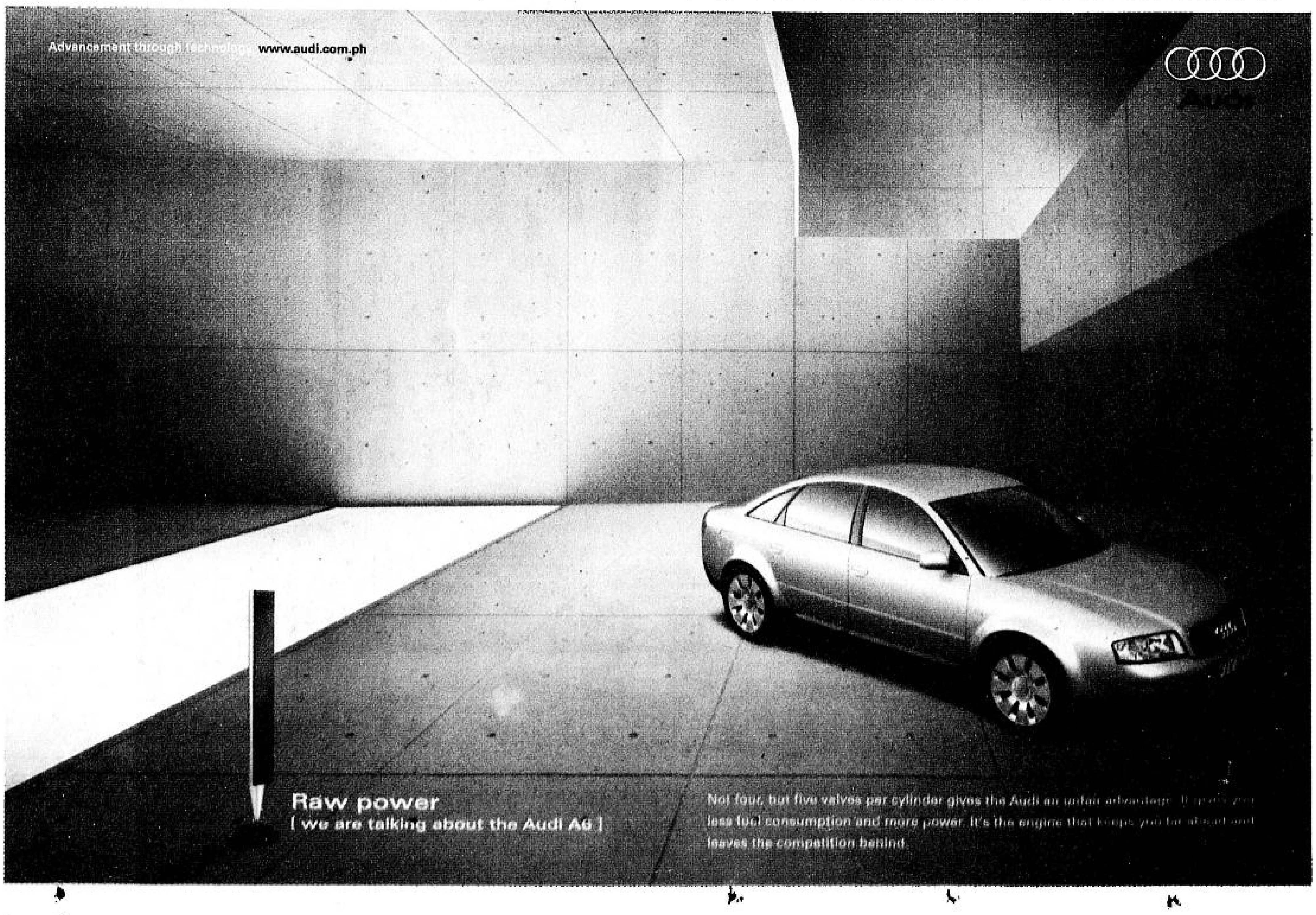

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German development service focuses on civilian peacekeeping in developing world

GLOBAL developments in recent years have made the task of the German Development Service (DED) a lot more challenging and demanding. An integral element of German development cooperation, the DED deputizes skilled and experience experts to various regions of Asia, Africa and Latin America. They render assistance in the areas of rural development, vocational training, health care, education, building settlements, crafts and trades, municipal administration and management of small businesses, among others.

DED, an acronym for Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst, was established in 1963. Its avowed objective is to work in cooperation with its partner countries towards contributing to the alleviation of poverty, self-help initiatives and implementation of human rights as well as promotion of democracy and civil conflict management in the developing world. In so doing, it has followed the guidelines set out by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) with respect to the focal areas of development assistance and cooperation for the future.

In particular, DED's focus on conflict prevention and management has been in line with BMZ's initiative on "Civil peacekeeping Service" launched at the end of 1999. It has already dispatched 29 experienced workers to regions where conflicts regarding land and land use have necessitated an urgent response.

DED has steadily expanded its activities over the years and today reflects an impressive record of some 1,000 development workers engaged in 43 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. It is the biggest German development agency charged with the deputation of trained and experience personnel to the developing world, according to its annual report for 2000 released amid much enthusiasm. A total of 195 DED development workers is in the field in the Asia region.

Asia occupies a significant place in DED's scheme of things, with the Philippines among the countries being actively serviced. The focus of its activities is predominantly in the areas of rural development and conservation of natural resources, followed by vocational training and management services.

The DED paradigm ha slowly shifted in the last couple of years with the promotion of democratic norms, observance of human rights of citizens, and participation of the local population in the planning and decision making processes taking center stage.

In accordance with the criteria of focal areas and special partner countries recently laid down by BMZ, Asia has also been seeing DED's emphasis being laid on development criteria which included economic reforms, drinking water, water management, solid waste disposal, health care, family planning, environment policy, and sustainable use of natural resources, among others.

The Philippines has been on DED's radar screen, notably for assistance in the areas of rural development and resource protection, for several years.

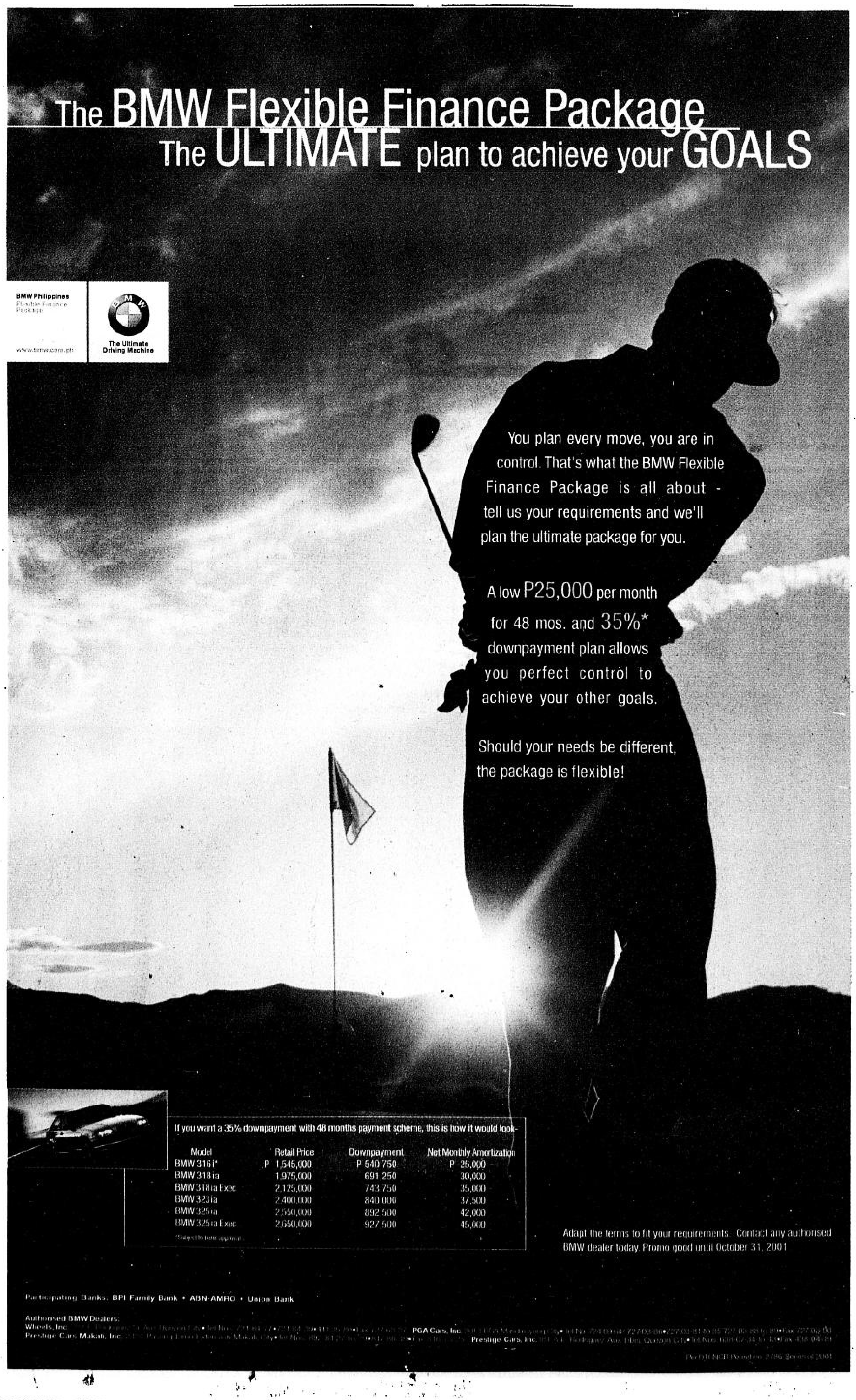
In particular, the potential for the development of small and medium-sized industries in the Philippines has resulted in DED focusing on vocational training, especially in the technical trades, and building up a cadre of experts.

Pertinently, DED's development work in Asia as elsewhere was predicated on a qualified, trained and experienced workforce competent to cope with the exigencies of all situations on the ground. It has enthused both male and female development workers alike, with the ration currently at 65:35 with the average age of a worker around 39.

"We are quite encouraged by the fact that we have no shortage of experienced personnel for deputation so far, nor is there a gender bias in development work, with females even enjoying an edge in professions such as health care and family planning activities," said Dr. Juergen Wilhelm, managing director of DED.

Furthermore, new and novel methods of partnerships with partner countries are also in the offing. DED was presently in discussion with the German utilities giant RWE towards setting up a solar energy project in a developing country, hopefully in the Asian region, for boosting the energy sector there.

DED's total outlay for its activities in 2000 amounted to DM 147 million. It covered 43 countries in an exercise that saw its nearly 1000 development workers spread out in the three continents, with Asia accounting for about a quarter of them.



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